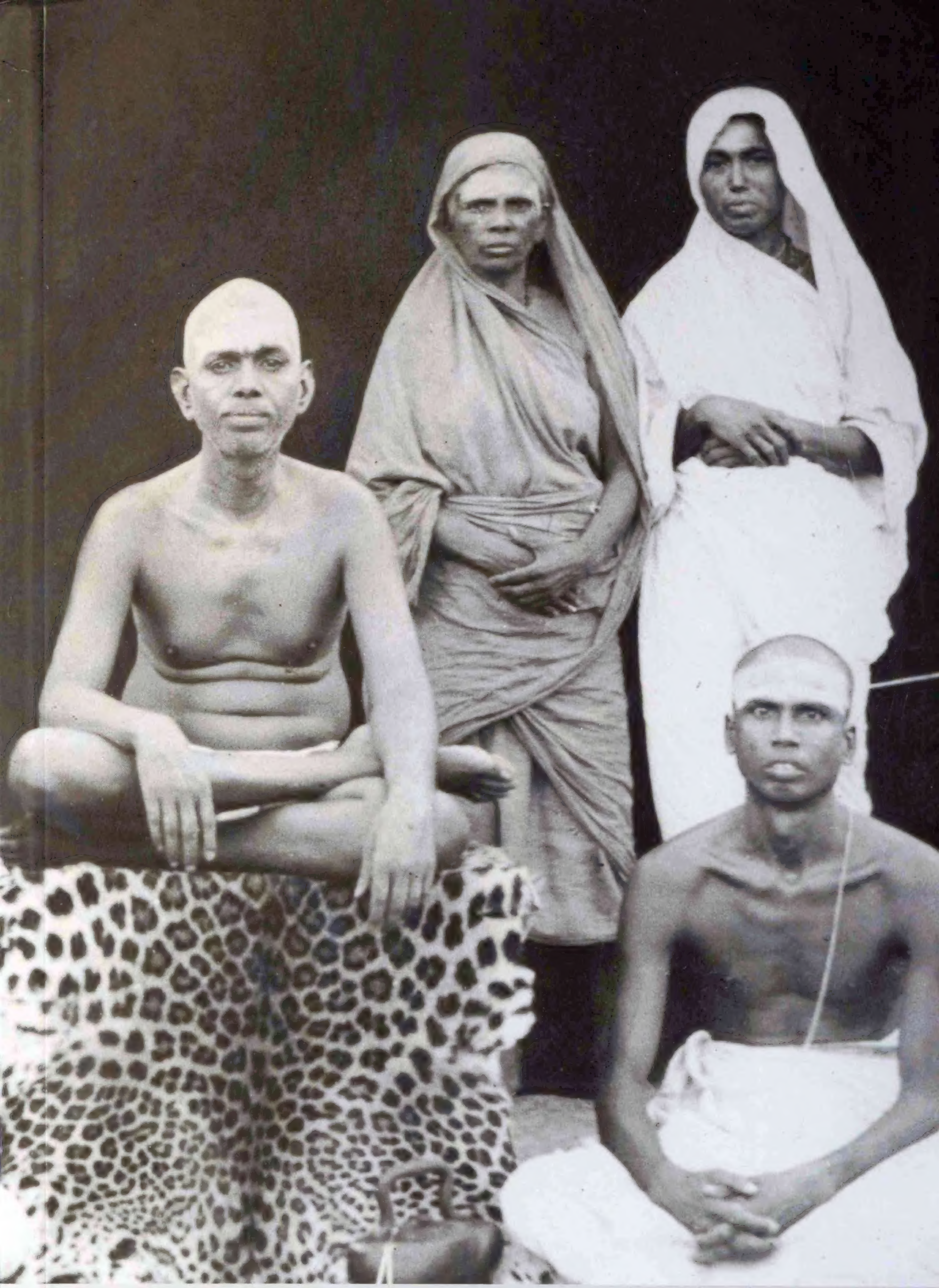

The Shining of my Lord

Muruganar

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Selected Verses from *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* and Other Muruganar Texts

Composed by Muruganar

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Other Muruganar books by David Godman:

Guru Vachaka Kovai
Padamalai
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Introduction

Muruganar and his literary works

Muruganar (1890-1973) is widely regarded as being one of the foremost devotees of Bhagavan. He was instrumental in getting Bhagavan to compose the verses that comprise *Ulladu Narpadu* and *Upadesa Undiyar*, two of Bhagavan's major philosophical poems, and he composed thousands of poems of his own that either praised Bhagavan, recorded his teachings or expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for having established him in the Self.[1]

Born in 1890 in Ramanathapuram District, he was originally known as C. K. Subramania Iyer, although his parents called him 'Sambamurthi' at home. After his secondary education he went on to become a distinguished Tamil pandit. He taught at the Norwich Girls' High School in Madras, was a scholar-member of the Tamil Lexicon committee (1913-19) that brought out a multi-volume dictionary in the 1920s, and for a short period of time he worked as a private tutor. Like many other people of his generation, he was an ardent nationalist who campaigned actively for Indian Independence. He composed poetry and songs that promoted the idea of political independence from Britain. These were eventually collected and published under the title *Sutantara Gitam*. After he came to Bhagavan in 1923, he gave up his political activities and took a vow that he would henceforth only write poetry about Bhagavan and his teachings. When Mahatma

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[1] Some portions of this account have been taken from the introduction I wrote for *Ramana Puranam* and from the chapter on Muruganar that appeared in *The Power of the Presence*, part two.

Gandhi made a brief visit to Tiruvannamalai in the early 1930s, Muruganar disposed of all the copies of *Sutantara Gitam* that remained in his possession by handing them out to the supporters of Gandhi who had come to hear him speak.

Muruganar, sitting on the left, with the Tamil Lexicon committee sometime between 1913 and 1919.

Although he had been active politically, Muruganar had a strong desire to find a Guru who would activate his poetic muse, grace him with his power and presence, and ultimately bestow liberation on him. His model for this Guru-disciple relationship was the historical one that had existed between Siva and the 9th century Tamil saint, Manikkavachagar. Siva had personally appeared to Manikkavachagar in the form of a human Guru while the latter was on a horse-buying expedition for his king. At this initial meeting Siva captured Manikkavachagar's heart so effectively, he abandoned the work the king had allocated to him and entrusted himself and the king's funds to his new Master. Later on, Siva inspired him to sing devotional songs that were eventually collected under the title *Tiruvachakam*. Over a thousand years later this collection is still regarded as being one of the classic texts of Tamil devotional poetry.

Muruganar had a father-in-law, Dandapani Swami, who had already discovered Ramana Maharshi. Dandapani Swami had moved to Tiruvannamalai while Bhagavan was still living in Skandashram. He was one of the first devotees to live in the new community of Ramanasramam that grew up at the foot of the hill when Sri Ramana's mother was buried there in 1922. For a few years prior to 1929 he was also the manager of Ramanasramam.

Dandapani Swami visited Muruganar in 1923, when Muruganar was thirty-three years old, and gave him a copy of *Aksharamanamalai*, the 108-verse poem in praise of Arunachala that Bhagavan had composed around 1914. As he went through the verses Muruganar became increasingly convinced that the author might be the Guru he was so urgently seeking. This is how, in later years, he described the impact that the poem and Dandapani Swami's visit had had on him:

> 'Will I, an unworthy ignorant one, ever be accepted as a devotee by Lord Siva who, as the Divine Guru with the wealth of grace, showed clearly to the world the greatness of Manikkavachagar? And even if I get such a chance, will I be able to sing of the glories of his grace-showering feet in the same way as *Tiruvachakam*?'
>
> Like many other thoughts that arose in my mind, this thought, a long time ago, appeared and disappeared like a flash of lightning manifesting in the sky.
>
> Then I heard from devotees who had redeemed themselves by taking as their support the grace of the one at Tiruvannamalai, who is the embodiment of true *jnana*, and who shines as the flame of true *tapas*. When they spoke of the greatness of his grace, they melted in joy. Hearing them, I was lost in admiration and unceasing joy.[2]

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[2] *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* (*Testament to Sri Ramana's Presence*), 'Origin of the work', lines 1-16. He also wrote, in 'Tiruvandappahudi' lines 271-272, 'Glory to him who, by showing me the beauty of his [*Aksharamanamalai*] verses, brought me under his rule, irredeemably enslaving me to his feet, even though I was an unworthy person'.

In September 1923 Muruganar decided to pay a visit to Tiruvannamalai to test his conviction that he had found his Guru. Just before he arrived at Ramanasramam, he stopped off at the Arunachaleswara Temple in Tiruvannamalai and composed eleven verses that were primarily a plea for Bhagavan's grace.

On the day of Muruganar's first visit Bhagavan was still living in a small thatched hut that had been erected over his mother's *samadhi*. Unsure of the correct way of approaching him, Muruganar remained for some time outside the hut, wondering what to do. Bhagavan solved the etiquette problem by coming out and saying '*Enna*?' ('What?'). In Tamil Nadu, this is a standard way of ascertaining what business a new visitor has.

In response to this query Muruganar began to sing the verses he had composed in the temple, but emotion soon got the better of him. Tears welled up in his eyes and he was unable to proceed.

'Can't you read?' asked Bhagavan. 'Give it to me. I shall read it myself.'

Bhagavan then read out the poem. Up till this time Muruganar had been very particular about annotating his poems with a specific raga or melody, since it was traditional that metres or themes had to be sung in a particular way. After this first encounter with Bhagavan, he was never able to sing his poems again.[3] Muruganar has described this first *darshan* in the following glowing terms:

> The compassionate Supreme One, who is endowed with *jnana*, then decided in his heart to be my Lord and Master...
>
> In the same way that wax melts on encountering fire, on seeing his feet, my mind dissolved and lost its form. Like a calf finding its mother, my heart melted and rejoiced in his feet. The hairs on my body stood on end. Devotion surged in me like an ocean that has seen the full moon. Through the grace of *chit-shakti* [the power inherent in consciousness], my soul was in ecstasy.

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[3] This description of the first meeting was given by Muruganar to V. Ganesan, who recorded it in 'Obeisance to the Poet-saint: Muruganar'. See *The Mountain Path*, 1973, pp. 202-3.

With an unsteady and quivering voice, I read the eleven verses and placed them at his feet. At that very moment he graciously looked at me with his lotus eyes. From that day on, the praises given out by my impartial tongue belonged only to him.

From the way he bestowed his grace, becoming my Lord and Master, I was completely convinced that he was Siva himself. As my new 'owner', he made my 'I' and 'mine' his own.

Even if I get submerged in the miry mud [of hell], I will not forget the mighty nobility of the bountiful bestower of grace.[4]

Dandapani Swami, Muruganar's father-in-law, the man who introduced Muruganar to Bhagavan's writings, is holding the pot and the stick. Muruganar is standing to his right. The photo dates from 1923, the year that Muruganar met Bhagavan for the first time.

---

4 *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, 'Tiruvandappahudi', lines 53-54, 63-80.

Muruganar's spontaneous decision, taken after this first meeting, that he would only in future write poetry about Bhagavan was one that he stuck to for the rest of his life. In an astoundingly prolific literary career he probably wrote close to 25,000 verses on Bhagavan, his teachings, and the transforming effect association with Sri Ramana had had on him.

These initial experiences clearly convinced Muruganar that he had found the Guru he was looking for. He stayed with Bhagavan for several days on this first visit, but on the third day he had the misfortune of being given a huge dose of what was probably *ganja lehiyam* (medicine containing cannabis) by one of the local *sadhus*. *Ganja* taking was common amongst a small group of *sadhus* who associated with Bhagavan at that time. This is how Muruganar described the experience when he was interviewed by B. V. Narasimhaswami in 1930:

> Two or three days after my arrival I was given some medicine. I do not know what it was, but it excited me and overpowered me. I sat in front of the Maharshi and concentrated my mind on his person. After a few minutes I had a vision of brightness. It was a suffused brightness all over his body and around it. The body was, however, distinct from the surrounding light. How long it lasted I do not know, so wholly lost was I in contemplating the vision. Kunju Swami, Dandapani Swami and Arunachala Swami were present while this was going on. Maharshi then appeared to me as Christ, for what reason I cannot say, and again as Mohammed and other great souls for similarly inexplicable reasons.[5]

Muruganar may have been remembering these experiences when he wrote the following verse:

> Exalted one!
> Great God Ramana!
> Should I say you are a great devotee?

---

5 *The Power of the Presence*, part two, pp. 99-100.

Should I say you are the Supreme?
Should I say you are the compassionate Christ?
Should I say you are a liberated person?
Should I say you are a sage?
Should I say you are the Prophet Mohammad?
Should I say you are a *jnani*?
Should I say you are an immaculate one [an *arhat*, a Jain sage]?
Should I say you are the heroic Buddha?
Should I say you are Siva?
Should I say you are his son, Kumara?[6]

Muruganar continues with the story of his first meeting with Bhagavan:

> I lost my former personality during this period, for it was submerged and lost in a huge ocean wave of a new state of spirituality. I was feeling that all my experience was dream-like, vague, insubstantial, and mysterious, in spite of the feeling that I was still in the waking condition. I was obsessed by this fear that my former worldly waking state was being smothered and my former self plundered of its sense of reality and individuality. I felt that as a consequence I might be perpetually held down to this strange life in Tiruvannamalai and be forever lost to my mother whose sole support I was.
>
> So I bawled out some words to this effect: 'Here are a band of robbers called *siddhas* [*sadhus* with supernatural powers] at whose head is this Ramana Maharshi! They are all intent on capturing souls who approach them in the waking condition and rapidly charming them into this mysterious *siddha's* sort of life and adding them to their group! As it would not be within the power of my mother or anyone else to see me or take me back from their iron clutch, I must start off from here at once!'

---

6 *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, 'Ramana Deva Padikam', verse 2.

I also added, looking at this bright dazzling figure of Maharshi and addressing him: 'So here I am, unable even for a few moments to endure this light. How wonderful it is that a woman, your mother, should have carried you in her womb for nine long months.'

In this high-strung state, and in this unique strain, I went on haranguing him for over an hour, punctuating my remarks by repeated prostrations to Maharshi. After that I wandered about here and there with Kunju Swami and Arunachala Swami, mostly around Pali Tirtham and the Chengam Road until about 3 a.m. I felt that all attempts to escape from the ashram were futile as the whole of Tiruvannamalai was giving me the same oppressive feeling, submerging my personality. [I felt] that Tiruvannamalai and the Maharshi were co-extensive and synonymous.[7]

In the 1980s I asked Kunju Swami what he remembered of this incident since he is cited here as being one of the people who looked after Muruganar. He replied:

We didn't know what the problem was. He was babbling incoherently and seemed very agitated. Bhagavan asked us to keep an eye on him because he didn't look like he was capable of looking after himself. Bhagavan's *darshan* sometimes had a very dramatic effect on new visitors. We knew that nothing bad could happen to a visitor while he was under Bhagavan's protection, so I wasn't really alarmed by Muruganar's behaviour. He just needed someone to look after him for a few hours till he calmed down.[8]

Towards the end of his first visit Muruganar had another visionary experience while sitting with Bhagavan:

A few days later, during the same trip to Tiruvannamalai, when I had no medicine to excite me, I again sat before

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7 *The Power of the Presence*, part two, pp. 100-101.

8 *The Power of the Presence*, part two, p. 101.

> the Maharshi and had a similar experience. Once again the figure of the Maharshi became brilliant, and my sense of personality was again submerged. Again my fears were roused that should I continue in his presence longer, I should be lost to my mother. So at midnight I hurried from the ashram into the town and spent the night in the house of one of my pupils.[9]

The comment about his mother is an interesting one. Muruganar was devoted to her. His father had died when he was very young, and this early death meant that he was financially responsible for his mother. When he felt that his continued presence at Ramanasramam might lead him to abandon his worldly responsibilities in order to spend all his time with Sri Ramana, he forcibly dragged himself away, resisting the urge to move full time to Ramanasramam until she passed away. In later years he dedicated both *Guru Vachaka Kovai* and *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* to his mother.

Three months later, in December 1923, Muruganar returned to Ramanasramam for his second visit. He brought with him a poem entitled 'Tiruvembavai'. The original and more famous 'Tiruvembavai' had been composed by Manikkavachagar, possibly as he was walking around Arunachala more than a thousand years ago. By presenting this poem, thematically and stylistically modelled on the original, to Bhagavan, Muruganar was indirectly expressing his desire to Bhagavan that he wanted him to have the same relationship with him that Siva had had with Manikkavachagar. The first verse that Muruganar had composed in the Arunachaleswara Temple on his earlier visit had mentioned this desire,[10] but the dramatic events of that first meeting seemed

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9 *The Power of the Presence*, part two, p. 101.

10 Guru Ramana, Siva, as once you left
Mount Kailas and the company of the gods
and came to cool Perunturai to drink in
the sparkling words of Vachagar,
now again you have come to fair Aruna town

to have precluded any exchange that related to this strong desire that Muruganar had.

Sadhu Om has described what happened next:

> He [Muruganar] one day composed his 'Tiruvembavai' beginning with the words 'Annamalai Ramanan'. Seeing that the verses of that song were replete with many sublime features similar to Manikkavachagar's *Tiruvachakam*, Sri Bhagavan playfully asked, 'Can you sing like Manikkavachagar?'
>
> Though Sri Muruganar took these words to be a divine command from his Guru, he prayed to him, 'Where is Manikkavachagar's divine experience of true *jnana*, and where is my state of *ajnana* [ignorance of the Self]? Only if Bhagavan removes my *ajnana* by his grace will it be possible for me to sing like Manikkavachagar. By the mere talent of this ego, how is it possible to sing like him?'
>
> Referring to the grace which Sri Bhagavan bestowed on him the moment he prayed thus, Sri Muruganar sings in the 'Nul Varalaru' of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*:
>
> ...I said, 'Where is my ignorant mind, which is like an owl blind to the bright sunlight, and which is darker than even the darkest darkness, and where is his experience of Self which surges as true *jnana* devoid of dark delusion? To compare me with him is like comparing a firefly with the sun!'
>
> As I said thus I languished, and as I languished that Lord who shines in my heart stirred my mind and made it blossom by his grace, and thus without my doing, he composed the work *Sri Ramana*

---

wishing to hearken to this fellow's puerile words.

From *Homage to the Presence of Sri Ramana*, verse 184, p. 17, translated by Prof. K. Swaminathan. Kailas is the Himalayan mountain where Siva is traditionally held to reside; 'Vachagar' is Manikkavachagar; and Perunturai was the coastal port in Tamil Nadu where Siva chose to manifest in a human form for him.

> *Sannidhi Murai* so that his true glory should flourish and shine exalted.

Thus, becoming a target of Sri Bhagavan's divine love, Sri Muruganar was transformed into an exalted divine poet. Just as Lord Siva made Manikkavachagar sing *Tiruvachakam*, having bestowed upon him the direct experience of the Self, so Sri Bhagavan made Muruganar sing *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* like *Tiruvachakam*, having in a single moment stirred his mind by his grace and having thereby bestowed upon him that same *anubhuti* [direct experience].[11]

For the next three years Muruganar was a regular visitor to Ramanasramam, coming whenever he had free time. He was so attached to being in Bhagavan's presence, on many occasions he would find it physically impossible to board the return train. He would wait on the platform at the Tiruvannamalai station, watch the train leave, and then return to Ramanasramam. When he was asked about this, he would say that his body could not physically step onto the train. After this had happened a few times, Bhagavan would send someone to the station with him to force him to get into a carriage. This continued until 1926 when Muruganar abandoned his life as householder and moved to Tiruvannamalai to be with Bhagavan full time.

During those early years he was working on *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, the collection of poetry that Bhagavan had encouraged him to compose. Its individual poems often paralleled those in the *Tiruvachakam*, but whereas in *Tiruvachakam* Manikkavachagar praised Siva and wrote of the experience of divine union that Siva had bestowed on him, in *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* Muruganar praises Bhagavan whom he takes to be Siva manifesting in a human form.

In 1927 Muruganar began to compose a poem for *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* that was modelled on 'Tiruvundiyar',

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[11] 'Sri Muruganar, the Right Hand of Sri Bhagavan,' by Sadhu Om, *Ramana's Muruganar*, pp. 57-8.

a *Tiruvachakam* poem of twenty verses that narrates some of Siva's divine exploits. Muruganar used the same title for his own version. The text itself imagined Bhagavan to be a whole range of different Hindu gods. Many famous puranic stories were retold with Bhagavan playing the role of all the deities whose stories were being narrated. After 102 verses Muruganar had just finished telling the story of how Siva manifested in the Daruka forest to teach the *rishis* there a lesson. In the traditional Tamil version of this story, the forest-dwelling sages are advocates of Karma Mimamsa, a *Veda*-based philosophy that dispenses with the need for God and says instead that salvation can be attained by the proper performance of vedic rituals and a strict adherence to vedic injunctions. Muruganar asked Bhagavan to take on the role of Siva and compose a thirty-verse lecture to the *rishis* in which he would first point out the errors of their atheistic approach to life and then go on to present his own teachings. Bhagavan obliged and composed *Upadesa Undiyar*, a work that is better known under its Sanskrit title, *Upadesa Saram*.

The following year, in 1928, Muruganar persuaded Bhagavan to cooperate on a more ambitious and extensive presentation of his teachings. Bhagavan had occasionally written down some of his key teachings in four-line Tamil verses, but they had never been collected or presented in a systematic way. Muruganar had the idea that extra verses could be composed on topics that had not so far been covered, and when the total reached forty, they could be published as a new and systematic exposition of Bhagavan's teachings. Bhagavan agreed and obliged him by writing new verses on topics that Muruganar suggested to him. However, as the editing work progressed, Muruganar decided that many of the previously-existing verses were not suitable for the final presentation. In the end only three of the original verses were retained, which meant that Bhagavan had to compose thirty-nine new verses to complete a work that had forty principal verses, each expounding on a separate aspect of Bhagavan's philosophical ideas, along with two benedictory verses. The poem was published as *Ulladu Narpadu* (*Forty on That-which-is*, or *Forty Verses on Reality*).

It is now widely recognised as being the most authoritative and most complete written presentation of Bhagavan's philosophy.

Muruganar had come to Bhagavan with several burning desires: he had wanted a Guru in human form who would be, for him, a physical manifestation of Siva; he had wanted that Guru to inspire him to write ecstatic devotional poetry; and he had also wanted the direct experience of the Self that would be the fundamental basis and inspiration of his poetry. The commission to write poetry in the style of Manikkavachagar came within weeks of his first meeting with Bhagavan. However, the moment when he attained the full experience of the Self is harder to pin down. Though Muruganar ultimately wrote thousands of verses that thanked Bhagavan for the direct experience of the Self which he had revealed to him, the date when it happened is noticeably absent. It is generally assumed to have happened quite soon after he and Bhagavan met since Muruganar is celebrating his liberation in many of his early verses. However, the only location-specific details come from three verses in *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* where Palakottu is mentioned as the site of the experience.[12] Palakottu is an area adjacent to Ramanasramam where many of Bhagavan's devotees lived in the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Muruganar himself lived there in the early years of his association with Bhagavan. It would seem from some lines in 'Keerti Tiruvahaval', one of the poems in *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, that Bhagavan met Muruganar there and asked him to come to the nearby forest with him. Muruganar subsequently wrote:

> He took me to the forest with him on the pretext of plucking leaves to make leaf-plates. There, with great delight, he destroyed my mind's restlessness by bestowing his glance on me. In the middle of the night he subdued my divided individual consciousness, granting me the experience of the undivided *Sivam*, pure consciousness.[13]

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12 *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, vv. 255, 1556 and 1557.

13 'Keerti Tiruvahaval', lines 224-228.

In subsequent years Muruganar wrote extensively about the glance of grace that had liberated him, but he never again mentioned the circumstances under which it happened. Here are two examples that will appear later in the book in a section entitled 'The glance of grace':

> Through the glance of the Guru who is the Lord of Aruna[chala], I experienced in a heart where darkness has perished completely the boundless life that surges as the expanse of grace, the *swarupa* [my own real nature] that exists forever without the delusion of death.
>
> My Lord bestowed on me the gaze of grace that is nothing but love, causing the bliss of consciousness to spring forth in the heart. The state of immortality merged with me, enabling me to experience as an eternal refuge the state of the Self, the state of peace.[14]

When Muruganar gave up his career to move to Tiruvannamalai, he took a decision that he was going to live as a begging *sadhu*. He initially lived in the Arunachaleswara Temple, but after a few days there he relocated to Palakottu to live in the colony of *sadhus* that had sprung up on an area of land that lay to the west of Ramanasramam. His move there came about when the priest of the temple in Palakottu noticed that monkeys were eating his food as he was preparing himself for his meal:

> His clothes, including the ones used for *bhiksha* [begging], would be spotlessly clean. Before eating the food [obtained] by alms, Muruganar would keep washing his hands and feet with sand in the tank at Palakottu. This would take quite a while. Sometimes the monkeys which abounded there at that time would eat his food and he would have to go hungry. Noticing this predicament of Muruganar, Sabapati Pillai, the priest of the Ganesh Temple there,

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[14] *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, volume six, verses 362 and 227.

invited Muruganar to stay with him and persuaded him to do so.[15]

Muruganar's obsession with personal cleanliness became legendary at Ramanasramam. One of his later students, Padma Venkataraman, has noted that he would use four full buckets of water just to wash his hands, feet and teeth.[16] The same attitude was manifested when he was asked to take charge, temporarily, of the *pujas* in the Mother's *Samadhi*:

> He would be rubbing the *lingam* so that there would not be any trace of oil from the *abhishekam*.... Next, he would endlessly clean the area.
>
> While watching him do the worship Bhagavan humorously remarked, 'The way you are rubbing the *lingam*, it would wear away in no time. The *lingam* itself would disappear!'[17]

Begging for one's food was an activity and a lifestyle choice that had a long tradition at Ramanasramam. Bhagavan himself went out begging for his food in the 1890s. In the Virupaksha Cave era parties of devotees would go to town every day to beg food for the ashram. After they had returned with the food that had been collected, Bhagavan would mix all the contributions together before distributing whatever had been received that day amongst the devotees who were living with him. His famous poem *Aksharamanamalai* was actually composed as a begging-for-food song. Devotees told him that they wanted a distinctive song that would indicate to devotees in town that the ashram begging party was approaching. Bhagavan obliged by writing this poem for them. In later years he said that the song had kept them fed for many years.

Muruganar begged his food independently, preferring to live the life of a mendicant monk, rather than being dependant on

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15 'Muruganar,' Smt. Kanakamma, *Ramana's Muruganar*, p. 8.

16 'The Blessed Days with Muruganar,' Smt. Padma Venkataraman, *Ramana's Muruganar*, p. 49.

17 'Muruganar,' Smt. Kanakamma, *Ramana's Muruganar,* p. 30.

an institution for food. Like Bhagavan before him, he felt that begging was an elevating rather than a demeaning activity. Here are two of his verses that reveal how happy he was to follow this tradition:

> For *sadhus*, the great life of accepting and eating food as alms is the fearless and majestic life of grace. It is a reproach-free life of existing as supreme bliss in the transcendental expanse, the state of peace devoid of the leaping of the insignificant mind.
>
> Through *jnana*, the authentic grace that terminates ignorance, I have been blessed with the great fortune of eating food obtained by begging in a way that elevates [rather than demeans]. And through the infinite *Sivam* [Siva-consciousness] nature that surges as inexhaustible wealth, both likes and dislikes became totally false.[18]

Muruganar's project to produce a volume of poetry that mirrored the *Tiruvachakam* was finally realised in January 1933 when the first edition of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* was published.

Bhagavan was full of praise for the work, going so far as to say, 'The very day that *Sannidhi Murai*... came out, Muruganar became one amongst the very foremost of devotees'.[19] Shortly after its publication the text was read communally and in its entirety in the old hall. Everyone present, including Bhagavan, took turns to read out a few pages from the book.

Though the first edition of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* contained over 1,200 verses, there was an important omission. *Tiruvachakam* begins with a ninety-five-line poem entitled 'Siva Puranam' in which Manikkavachagar praises Siva, but *Sri Ramana*

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[18] *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, volume seven, verse 454, and volume five, verse 172.

[19] See footnote twenty-six on page 127 of *The Power of the Presence*, part two. The footnote includes reports of several other occasions when Bhagavan praised Muruganar.

Sannidhi Murai had no equivalent poem as an introduction. Kanakamma has described how this lacuna was remedied:

> In the first edition of *Ramana Sannidhi Murai* there was no poem corresponding to 'Siva Puranam' of *Tiruvachakam*. Since this work was patterned on *Tiruvachakam*, it seemed incomplete to that extent. So Muruganar started composing a poem on the same lines. His inspired pen quickly wrote two hundred lines. At this stage a doubt arose in his mind as to what would be the appropriate title for this [work]. The obvious title could be 'Siva Puranam', since Siva's name is dear to his devotees and Ramana was the embodiment of Lord Siva. But the verses were extolling the glory of the Lord as Ramana. So why not call it 'Ramana Puranam'? Thus tossed by doubt Muruganar left the place, leaving the lines at Ramana's feet.
>
> When he returned in the evening Ramana handed back the poems. A great surprise was in store for Muruganar. Ramana had distinctly written 'Ramana Puranam' not only at the top of the work but also at the top of each and every page. He had not stopped with that. He had himself composed three hundred more lines and completed the work... .
>
> When the second edition of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* was [about to be] published these verses were also added. Muruganar had included a footnote to indicate that the first two hundred lines had been composed by him and the remaining three hundred by Bhagavan. After correcting the proof he handed over the matter to Ramana. While going through it Ramana saw the footnote and remarked, 'Are only these [lines] written by Bhagavan?'
>
> Muruganar at once saw his error. Were not the earlier ones too a product of Ramana's grace? He at once prostrated to Bhagavan and with profuse tears said, 'Nothing is written by me. Everything flows from your grace.' He then promptly deleted the footnote.[20]

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[20] 'Muruganar,' Smt. Kanakamma, *Ramana's Muruganar*, pp. 12-13. Muruganar never subsequently revealed where 'his' section ended and

'Ramana Puranam' was completed in early 1938. It was included in a second edition of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* that was published in April 1939 by Ramanapadananda, a devotee who undertook the responsibility of publishing most of the poetry that Muruganar wrote during Bhagavan's lifetime.

While Muruganar was writing the poetry that would eventually be published as *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, he was also recording Bhagavan's teachings in four-line Tamil verses. If he heard Bhagavan say something interesting, he would compose a four-line verse that encapsulated the teachings Bhagavan had given out, and would then wait for an opportunity to show the verse to Bhagavan himself. This would usually take place later the same day. Bhagavan would either give his imprimatur to the presentation or suggest changes that Muruganar should make. The redrafting would be done by Muruganar and the completed, corrected verse would be shown to Bhagavan a few hours later. The significance of this process cannot be overestimated. In the 1920s and 30s Muruganar was the only devotee who recorded Bhagavan's teachings in the original Tamil, and then got them corrected and approved by Bhagavan himself, usually within a few hours of them being spoken. Almost all the other teachings that Bhagavan gave out verbally in Tamil were written down in English, and only a very small proportion of them were checked and approved by him prior to publication.

Muruganar (sitting) with Ramanapadananda, the devotee who published all his books during Bhagavan's lifetime.

By 1939 Muruganar had amassed a collection of over 800 verses that recorded teaching statements Bhagavan had made. Bhagavan wanted the collection to be published, with the verses arranged by subject, but he was aware that while Muruganar had a talent for recording the teachings accurately in Tamil verse, he did not

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Bhagavan's started. The 300-plus lines that Bhagavan contributed to this work are the longest piece of poetry he ever wrote.

have either the habit of or the inclination towards arranging them in a thematic way. Bhagavan gave this processing job to Sadhu Natanananda, a Tamil scholar-devotee, who had already proved that he had the necessary expertise to arrange presentations of Bhagavan's teachings in a coherent order.[21] At some point during this editing process the title *Guru Vachaka Kovai* (*Garland of the Guru's Sayings*) was given to the book.

Once Sadhu Natanananda had finished his work, it was sent to the press and a proof copy of the text was returned to Ramanasramam so that Bhagavan himself could check it. Bhagavan took this editing job very seriously. He rewrote some of the verses, added extra verses of his own, and occasionally changed the order in which the teachings had been presented. Once he had satisfied himself that the main text was as good as it could be, he turned his attention to the introduction that Sadhu Natanananda had written. There he found the following sentence:

> In summary, it can be said that this is a work that has come into existence to explain in great detail and in a pristine form Sri Ramana's philosophy and its essential nature.[22]

He took out his pen and inserted one extra syllable in Tamil that made the sentence read either 'this work...indeed has come into existence...' or 'this work ... alone has come into existence...'. If the second meaning is taken, it is an extraordinary endorsement of the book. It would be saying, in effect, that out of all the books of Sri Ramana's teachings that were available at the time, this is the only one that explained 'in great detail and in a pristine form Sri Ramana's philosophy and its essential nature'. Whichever way one interprets the insertion, Bhagavan's editorial addition is

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[21] Sadhu Natanananda was the compiler and editor of *Upadesa Manjari* (*Spiritual Instruction*) and the editor of the question-and-answer version of *Vichara Sangraham* (*Self-Enquiry*), both of which had already appeared in Bhagavan's *Collected Works*.

[22] *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T. V. Venkatasubramanian, Robert Butler and David Godman, p. xxvi. A scan of the original 1939 proof copy, showing Bhagavan's interpolation, can be found on this page.

an outstanding tribute to the collecting and drafting work that Muruganar contributed to the project. Given the history of the recording process, Bhagavan's involvement in the final editing, and the way he corrected Sadhu Natanananda's introduction, I think it is safe to say that *Guru Vachaka Kovai* is the most authoritative collection of Bhagavan's spoken teachings.

Muruganar continued to record Bhagavan's teaching statements in verse form until the latter passed away in 1950. These additional verses were added to the Tamil edition that was published by Ramanasramam in 1974, bringing the total up to 1,254.

Muruganar continued to write devotional poetry, with two more volumes being published during Bhagavan's lifetime: *Sri Ramana Deva Malai* in 1939 and *Sri Ramana Sarana Pallandu* in 1943. Two additional books, entitled *Sri Ramana Anubhuti* parts one and two, appeared in 1960 and 1961.[23]

In the 1950s, 60s and early 70s, after Bhagavan had passed away, Muruganar continued to compose poetry that recorded his own experiences of the Self or expressed various aspects of the teachings he had learned from Bhagavan. Unlike the poems that went into *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, these later verses were not written with a particular theme or publishing plan in mind. They tended instead to appear spontaneously in his mind in a flow that eventually turned into a torrent. He would record the verses that appeared, almost ready-made, in his head on scraps of paper, or he would dictate them to visitors who had come to see him. In the last years of his life he would sometimes write the new verses down on a slate. If no one took the trouble to make a copy, the slate would be wiped clean whenever a new verse needed to be recorded. Devotees who looked after him in his final years have reported that the muse could strike at any moment of the day or night, causing him to recite poetry that had apparently appeared in a polished and completed form in his mind. Here are two of his verses that allude both to the spontaneous nature of his later

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[23] Part one now has the title *Sri Guru Ramana Prasadam* and part two is called *Sri Ramana Anubhuti*. Robert Butler has translated and published an English edition of *Sri Guru Ramana Prasadam*.

poetic output and its tendency to engage him at any hour of the day or night:

> My Guru Lord, who has the power to grant true *jnana*, reached and adopted my heart as his temple and stood shining there. After he had revealed to me that the proper way of praising him was only wordless silence, I praised him with whatever [words] popped up in my mouth!
>
> Whether it is morning, evening or noon, my Lord, without ever leaving me, remains merged with me as pure grace, pure consciousness. He dominates my utterances so powerfully, even in the middle of the night I sing only of the glory of his generosity. He will not allow [my tongue] to accept any other topic.[24]

Muruganar's vast collection of unsorted verses was rescued from potential oblivion by Sadhu Om, a Tamil scholar and poet who came to Bhagavan in 1946. Recognising the genius of Muruganar and the value of his poetic output, he undertook the massive project of collecting and preserving all of Muruganar's verses. After making new, handwritten copies of everything he could find, over the succeeding decades he sorted out all the available verses, arranging them into thematic groups. Some indication of the work involved can be gauged from the fact that the number of verses he copied, preserved and arranged amounted to well in excess of 17,000. He also found time to edit the 1974 edition of *Guru Vachaka Kovai* which included his prose expansions of all the verses, explanatory notes by Muruganar, and his supplementary explanations for some of the verses.[25] Given their close cooperation over many decades, it is not surprising that Muruganar designated Sadhu Om to be his literary executor. In the final weeks of his life

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[24] *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, volume four, verse 1817 and volume two, verse 2.

[25] In the late 1970s and early 1980s Sadhu Om and Michael James worked together on an English translation of *Guru Vachaka Kovai*. It was eventually published by the ArunachalaRamana Book Trust in 2005.

Muruganar entrusted all his manuscripts to Sadhu Om, saying that he was the only person who had the requisite knowledge to curate and process them for eventual publication.

Sadhu Om (standing) and Muruganar

Muruganar was one of the very few people who had been given personal lessons by Bhagavan on the meaning of his written works. In the 1950s he was persuaded to share this knowledge with a small group of mostly women devotees who asked him for lessons on the texts. They thought that having these study sessions in Tiruvannamalai would be a good way of staying in touch with Bhagavan's presence. Though Muruganar was happy to give lessons to these devotees on the meanings of Bhagavan's

philosophical and devotional poetry, he made it clear that he did not want to be regarded as a Guru in his own right. He always insisted that devotees should take Bhagavan as their Guru. His role was to be restricted to giving out explanations of what Bhagavan had taught him.

While Bhagavan was still alive, Muruganar had written a commentary on *Aksharamanamalai*, calling it *Aksharamanamalai Vritti Urai*. Bhagavan went through his manuscript and made at least one editorial change. The work was first published in Tamil in 1952 and remained untranslated until last year when two English versions of the text appeared, both published by Sri Ramanasramam.[26]

After Muruganar passed away in Ramanasramam in 1973, Sadhu Om continued the job of copying and arranging the material that Muruganar had bequeathed to him. The publication of this vast collection of verses was facilitated by Prof. K. Swaminathan who was a long-time admirer and friend of Muruganar.[27] In the 1970s he persuaded the Central Government in New Delhi to subsidise the publication of Muruganar's remaining poetry. Nine volumes were published by the New Delhi Ramana Kendra under the title *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, a title selected by Sadhu Om.[28] The subsidy allowed the books to go on sale for Rs 10 per copy (about 15 US cents at the current exchange rate). The initial printing has recently sold out and is unlikely to be reprinted in the near future, but the entire text has been scanned and is now available on the Ramanasramam web site.[29]

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[26] *Arunachala Aksharamanamalai*, translated by Robert Butler, and *Arunachala Akshara Mana Malai*, translated by 'KAYS'.

[27] Prof. Swaminathan made a complete translation of *Guru Vachaka Kovai* (entitled *Garland of the Guru's Sayings*) and a partial translation of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, which was published in English under the title *Homage to the Presence of Sri Ramana*. Both books were published by Sri Ramanasramam.

[28] Muruganar occasionally gave titles to individual verses, but the section titles in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* were all created by Sadhu Om. *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* can be translated as *The Experience of Jnana Bestowed by Sri Ramana*, or *Experiencing the Jnana that is Sri Ramana*.

[29] http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource_centre/publications/ramana-jnana-bodham/

After Sadhu Om passed away in 1985, volumes five to nine of *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* were published posthumously. However, he had completed most of the work on them before he died. The arrangement and editorial decisions made in these later volumes embody the work that Sadhu Om had completed in the last years of his life.

Though the books came out in the 1970s, 80s and 90s, it was not until 2004 that any substantial portion of *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* appeared in English.[30] That year saw the publication of *Padamalai*, an English translation of over 1,800 verses taken from a poem of the same name that had appeared in volume nine.[31] This poem recorded two-line teaching statements by Bhagavan that Muruganar had written down after Bhagavan passed away. It also included many verses in which Muruganar extolled Bhagavan or thanked him for the grace that had enabled him to realise the Self.

In the first decade of this century I spent many years working on translations of Muruganar's poetry with Dr T. V. Venkatasubramanian and Robert Butler. The fruits of this collaboration were annotated English translations of *Padamalai*, *Guru Vachaka Kovai* and *Ramana Puranam*. In 2015 Venkatasubramanian asked me to assist him in bringing out in English a substantial selection of verses from the first eight volumes of *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*. I agreed since I had found in the past that working on projects such as these was a wonderful way of focusing intently on Bhagavan's teachings. Over the last two years we have selected, translated and arranged just over 1,000 verses, almost all of which have not appeared in English before. We picked a mixture of two- and four-line verses that record both teachings and personal experiences. They have been all arranged thematically in small groups under subheadings that we have created especially for this book. We have also added a

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30 Some stray verses have appeared in the writings of Sadhu Om and Michael James and also in Prof. Swaminathan's *Homage to the Presence of Sri Ramana*.

31 *Padamalai*, translated by T. V. Venkatasubramanian, Robert Butler and David Godman and edited by David Godman.

few extra verses that originally appeared in *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, *Sri Ramana Deva Malai* and *Sri Ramana Anubhuti*. The sources of all the verses we utilised can be found in an appendix at the end of the book.

One other work of Muruganar's should be mentioned: *Anubhuti Venba*. The papers that were bequeathed to Sadhu Om included a manuscript that contained prose explanations of about 800 of Muruganar's verses. Ninety-five pertained to *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, while the remainder had explanations of verses that were eventually included in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*. These verses, along with explanatory notes, were published by Sri Ramanasramam in 2005. Some of the verses we have selected for this book have prose explanations and individual titles in *Anubhuti Venba*. Wherever necessary we have used this explanatory material to make more accurate translations.

David Godman, May 2017

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Preliminary Verses

Many Tamil literary works contain an introductory section comprising verses that expound on topics such as dedications, apologies, sources of inspiration, the benefits of reading the work, along with any other subject matter that the author feels will properly preface the work. Though the verses of *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* were never intended by Muruganar to be published as a single coherent text, some of them were clearly intended to be used as introductory verses for other works. A few contain specific references to *Anubhuti*, a book that Muruganar may have done preliminary work on but never completed. *Anubhuti* means 'direct experience'. There is one dedicatory verse that refers to *Anubhuti Venba*. *Venba* is a Tamil metrical verse form that was used by both Bhagavan and Muruganar. This may have been the full title of a book that would have used some of the verses from this collection.

Since Muruganar liked to introduce his works with explanatory and benedictory verses, this new anthology begins with a collection trawled from eight of the nine volumes of *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*.

The verses in this anthology contain a number of technical terms in Tamil and Sanskrit. Many of these have been left in. When key words that are usually impossible to translate in one or two English words first appear, a brief explanation of them will be given immediately after the section heading. More obscure terms or cultural references that appear infrequently will either be explained in footnotes or in a bracketed translation next to the term in the text. Definitions for all these terms can be found in the glossary at the end of the book.

jiva — This is the soul or the individual entity that inhabits the body. In Saivism it is regarded as an entity that can either falsely identify with the body or attain union with Siva. In Sri Ramana's teachings it tends to be categorised as an unreal entity, the disappearance of which results in a direct and unmediated knowledge of the Self.

jnana — This means 'knowledge', but it does not denote a knowledge of 'things'. It is the direct and unmediated knowledge of one's own Self. One who has this knowledge is known as a '*jnani*'.

mauna — 'Silence.' This is not the antonym of noise but the rock-solid stillness of the Self and Self-abidance.

Sivam — Muruganar had a strong background in Saiva Siddhanta philosophy and often uses technical terms from that system that rarely appear in other presentations of Sri Ramana's teachings. *Sivam* is one such term. It denotes the consciousness of Siva, rather than the deity. As such it is one of the many synonyms for the formless Self.

swarupa — This is a key term in Ramana Maharshi's teachings and Muruganar's presentations of them. Literally it means one's own ('*swa*') form ('*rupa*'). As a compound it can be translated as 'One's own true nature,' 'One's own true form,' or simply be another synonym for the formless Self. It often appears preceded by *Atma*, the Self. *Atma-swarupa* means 'the Self, one's true nature or innate identity'.

Dedication

1 I dedicate these verses, possessing the fragrance of true *jnana* that is wholly of the nature of *Sivam*, to the feet of my Lord. I do so in an appropriate way with much awe, devotion and an abounding sense of humility.

I sing only of my Lord's grace

2 My poetry is solely meant for my Lord. I will never offer even a word of it to anyone else. The immaculate light of *jnana* befits my words of grace. Because my Lord excels through this light, he is a truly worthy person to match with my poetry.

3 Whether it is morning, evening or noon, my Lord, without ever leaving me, remains merged with me as pure grace, pure consciousness. He dominates my utterances so powerfully, even in the middle of the night I sing only of the praiseworthy glory of his generosity. He will not allow [my tongue] to accept any other topic.

I have been blessed with poetry

4 My Lord is the merciful one who truly reigned over me with his look of grace that put an end to my suffering. My soul now considers a true life for itself to be doing nothing else other than dwelling on and singing of the supreme God, the liberal benefactor, with its mind and tongue.

5 He, the celestial *karpaga* [wish-fulfilling][1] tree that grants divine grace, revealed to and bestowed on me the state of pure consciousness, the treasure that is so difficult to acquire. Praising him in verses is the sole worthwhile pastime that, day after day, takes place in my heart.

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[1] The *karpaga* is a celestial wish-fulfilling tree that appears in many Hindu mythological tales. Muruganar, here and in other places, identifies the tree with the form of the *jnani*.

6 My Lord, an adept in the science of pure grace, arose vigorously in my heart as the oneness that is immaculate *Sivam*, destroying the ruining ignorance, the ego-delusion, the *jiva* nature. Who am I to sing of his glory, and how indeed can the power of my poetry succeed in this?

7 Through his roseate eyes, in which shine *swarupa*-consciousness, he destroyed my ignorance, the infatuation with the world that shrouded me. Through that gaze he impelled my poetic talent towards the state of *Sivam*, abidance in which is the very essence of *tapas*.[2] As he bestowed the knowledge of his real nature, my consciousness came to rest entirely in my Lord's feet.

8 I do not know whether I was bad or good in the past. Even if I was bad before, I am now a very virtuous person, for have I not been blessed with the good fortune of singing this garland of praise, rich with felicitous words of classical Tamil, for my Lord whose feet are filled with lustre?

9 My Lord's look of grace entered my heart enabling the light of the heart to wax more and more, becoming its inspiration. As a result, my poetical utterances, radiating a revelation of *jnana*, function sweetly in me, having attained an opulent luxuriance of the highest order.

10 He will utter the same thing. He will speak only one word. He abides as my own *swarupa*, which exists as one from time immemorial. Taking me as a mere instrument, and with absolutely no doing of my own, he sings in an elegant manner this *anubhuti* that is endowed with the beauty of exalted *jnana*, and which is fit to be presented in an assembly of the learned.[3]

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[2] *Tapas* is arduous spiritual practice, often with an element of self-mortification, undertaken to attain a spiritual goal.

[3] In ancient times new literary texts were often read out to groups of

What are my qualifications to write these verses?

11 Let not my detractors question whether I possess the qualification to sing this *anubhuti*. This work is a consequence of the flood of *chit-shakti* [the power of consciousness] of [Sri Ramana], the mighty wielder of divine grace and the liberal bestower of *anubhuti*.

12 The supreme power of grace, the real nature of the one who exercised dominion over me by dwelling sweetly here inside my heart, flares up again and again, goading and kindling my consciousness, as a consequence of which the verses of this *Anubhuti Venba* surge forth.

13 As a result of worshipping daily with my salutation only the feet of grace of my Lord who exists as my trustworthy companion, my mind became one-pointed. The glorious attainment of the *jnana* experience reached me, as did the excellent power of singing in an illustrious manner verses suffused with grace.

14 The king who transcends both speech and mind granted to me the direct experience [of the Self], along with poetry inspired by divine grace. From then on, glorifying the *chintamani* [the wish-fulfilling jewel] who destroyed the bewilderment of the mind that had ruined me became my life's sole occupation.

15 My Guru Lord, who has the power to grant true *jnana*, reached and adopted my heart as his temple and stood shining there. After he had revealed to me that the proper way of praising him was only wordless silence, I praised him with whatever [words] popped up in my mouth!

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scholars who would then pass judgment on the quality of the work that had been presented.

16 As the supreme light of grace, my God reigned over me in the heart, ensuring the complete absence of darkness and its progeny. As a result, a poetic scholarship endowed with divine grace reached out to me in a perfect way, providing an underpinning for the service I render to the unsullied divine feet of grace.

17 I did not myself compose these verses. The heart of this bewildered and limitation-bound person blossomed through the power of true *jnana*. Then that power of *jnana*, dwelling in my tongue, takes birth as sweet Tamil *venba* verses possessing the excellence of that *jnana*.

Who can benefit from reading them?

18 Know that the readers who are fit to study this work are those in whom abounds the auspicious longing to attain on this earth the life of grace, the *mauna* saturated with the beauty of *swarupa* that shines in the heart in the form of being-consciousness.

19 These verses, suffused with *bhakti* [love and devotion] for divine grace, were uttered while meditating with the entire heart on the noble state that is full of grace. They will show the way to redemption in the hearts of true devotees who rejoice in these [verses], regarding [a study of them] as a gift bestowed by supreme grace for *tapas* previously performed.

The subject of my verses

20 The matter expounded on in this work is the *jnana* experience that arose through divine grace. This [*jnana* experience] enabled me, a stupid dog wallowing in the state of complete ignorance about the way to redemption, to attain in my heart the certainty of salvation.

21 This work is an intensely sweet lump of sugar candy that overflows with joy. It arose through contemplating with the

mind and praising with the tongue in an appropriate way the state of *mauna*, the perfect *jnana* that my Lord delightfully bestowed on me, [revealing it to be] my own nature.

22 The divine song I repeatedly sing is only about the destruction of the ego-ghost[4] that rises as 'I'. The experience of *swarupa* in which the mind remains captivated, becoming eternal bliss, is a superlative fortune that is worthy of being desired by the *jiva*.

23 The import of this work dealing with the experience of grace is only *mauna*, the ocean of joy of the non-dual being-consciousness, the ever-existing nature shining as 'I-I' that enables the heart to attain illumination in a fitting way.

24 He is the Lord who reforms the heart of devotees, causing the true life of dwelling at his roseate feet to become natural to them even while they live in this world. The ambrosial theme of the verses I sing is the glory of his grace, which is ambrosia to the ears of his devotees.

My Lord's light protects my words

25 Through his look that radiates the light of supreme grace, destroying bondage, my Guru-Lord completely annihilated the sheaths of the body.[5] The light of being, the *swarupa* that shines in my heart as the presence of my Lord, will exist as the protection for this work on *anubhuti*.

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[4] Ego-ghost, a concept derived from *Ulladu Narpadu*, verse twenty-five, is a term that Muruganar often utilises. It denotes the idea that the individual 'I' is an unreal entity that appears to exist but which has no fundamental reality. Like a ghost, it has no real form of its own. It needs to attach itself to a body in order to appear to be real.

[5] There are five sheaths (*kosas*) through which the ego is held to function. Since the individual 'I' is present in all five sheaths, they all veil the unmediated experience of the underlying Self.

Apologies

26 Like a young parrot that repeats itself again and again, I also sing.

27 Only the divine and blessed grace that is pure being-consciousness may know the greatness of the experience of abiding as pure being. Instead of enjoying it quietly, I am blabbering [poetry] like a madman, uttering whatever pops up in my mind, without any self-restraint.

28 Do the utterances of the mad, the foolish and the devotees come within the province of critical examination? The great ones who are wise will accept whatever I have said, [placing it] in the same category, and will not pick out faults and speak about them.

29 Assuming the form of the Guru, my Lord of grace seated himself in my soul, taking it as his royal throne. I thought of myself as a drummer, proclaiming the glory of my Lord's grace, but in his divine presence I stand dumb.

Those who publish it

30 This collection of verses holds the import of the *jnana* experience [I] possess. Those who print it perfectly and offer it to true devotees who desire it, as service to God brought about by divine grace, will live happily, experiencing bliss and possessing in abundance the wealth of divine grace.

Thanks also to...

31 To my head which helped me to prostrate to you, to my tongue which helped me to sing your praises, and to my mind which helped me to meditate on you, I offer my eulogies again and again.

The Feet of my Lord

The feet of the Lord can be viewed both physically and metaphorically. In addition to being physical appendages, they also denote the state of the Guru, the power by which he brings devotees to maturity and liberation, the goal for devotees who wish to surrender to him, and much else besides. The route to liberation is often viewed as a process by which the head (the individual *jiva*) surrenders to and gets absorbed in the feet, which represent the true state of the Lord. In the physical realm the head prostrates itself to the feet of the Guru as an indication of its subservience. In the spiritual realm the *jiva* strives to integrate itself into the feet and ultimately dissolve itself there.

In Tamil *padam*, translated as 'the feet,' is a singular noun that means 'the foot'. Since English texts have traditionally used 'feet' to denote this idea, we have used the plural form whenever the word *padam* appears.

Four more key terms make a first appearance in this section:

chit-para This is a compound noun in which *chit* denotes 'consciousness' and *para* 'the supreme'. '*Para*' is not an adjective here. It does not mean 'the supreme consciousness', which would imply that there are other, less exalted, varieties of consciousness. It literally means 'consciousness which is the supreme'. Throughout this book we have translated this phrase as 'consciousness-the-supreme'.

Sadasivam Muruganar occasionally used the word *Sadasivam* when he wrote about the state of the Self. This has the same meaning as *Sivam* but it also has additional

nuances. In Saiva Siddhanta philosophy *Sadasivam* is often used to characterise the grace-bestowing aspects and properties of *Sivam*.

sphurana Bhagavan defines *sphurana* as an emanation or radiation of the Self, often experienced as a pulsation of 'I' or 'I-I'. This 'I-I' pulsation is frequently used by Bhagavan to describe the experience of the Self, but on a few occasions he qualifies this by saying that it is a state that is experienced just before final realisation.

turiya *Turiya* means 'the fourth'. It is the substratum in which the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping alternately manifest. One who is established as *turiya* has transcended the mind and its mental states and is established in the underlying Self.

The nature of my Lord's feet

32 Through a keen understanding I have realised the truth about the feet of the Guru: they are *chit-para* [consciousness-the-supreme]; they are innate to all; they exist as pure being and reveal themselves to be the *sphurana* 'I-I' in minds that perform self-enquiry with great enthusiasm.

33 The feet of my Lord, the *swarupa* that is the supreme light, shine prominently as a beautiful lamp lit on the hill of my heart. The extremely bewitching beauty that the world displays in abundance is only the splendour of the grace of those triumphant feet.

Taking refuge in my Lord's feet

34 Those who take as their target the feet of Guru Ramana will be completely freed from the mind, the source of deluding bewilderment. By taking refuge in Guru Ramana the mind of this forlorn devotee reached the state of tranquillity, having been freed from its fickle nature.

35 The comfortable and pleasant home for me is only the shade of my Lord's feet of grace. The unsurpassed bliss that exists under the shade of the feet of grace cannot be obtained by the *jiva* even if it rules all the seven worlds.[6]

36 The feet of my Lord, shining as a uniquely beautiful lamp that illumines the mount of Aruna [Arunachala], exist as a verification of the *mahavakyas*.[7] Not even for a minute can I exist in a state of forgetfulness of those feet that overflow with compassion and which completely fill my consciousness as my own *swarupa*.

37 O mind of mine, you who have the excellence of *jnana*! You have taken refuge in the Lord's golden feet of divine grace, a spring that generates the wealth of supreme bliss without ever drying up, ensuring that there is never any scarcity. Therefore, even if there is a famine on this earth, there will be nothing lacking for you.

38 Because the shade of the grace-filled, red-hued feet of my Lord flourishes and embraces me in all the places I visit, I rejoice in the supreme joy that is saturated with the peace of the experience of *Sadasivam*, unaware of the triple torments [*tapatraya*][8] that rise and flare up.

39 Once the head [the *jiva*] has settled firmly in the Lord's feet [the Self] and attained the essence of those feet through the silence of *swarupa* whose nature is consciousness and which shines as the light of *turiya* at all times, there is absolutely no way it can again leave those feet and enter the world of objects.

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[6] Hindu mythology postulates fourteen worlds, seven earthly and heavenly realms and seven 'underworlds'. The 'seven worlds' in this verse denote the earth and the six heavenly realms that are above it.

[7] The four *mahavakyas* ('great sayings') are four key upanishadic statements that declare the nature of reality and one's identity with it.

[8] The triple miseries are those brought about by oneself, those brought about by natural events, and those that occur as a result of destiny.

40 The real nature of the feet of the Guru who brought me under his rule is pure consciousness. I obtained as the ultimate goal attachment to those feet. With absolutely no necessity for renunciation, it [the attachment to the feet] became *swarupa* in which everything shines as the one Self.

41 By conducting myself as a servant to the feet of my Lord who is the *swarupa* that shines within me as my support, I do not experience fear in my mind, not even for Yama [death, or the god of death], because the experience of the fortress of *mauna* has become even better buttressed.

Meditating on the feet

42 The feet of our Lord are impossible to attain except by those who abide contemplating them in a thought-free way.

43 Other than wholeheartedly thinking of the divine Lord's feet, there are no alternative means in any place whatsoever for one's redemption. The divine Lord, the omnipresent God, will manifest out of the thought [of his feet] you are dwelling on as the light of consciousness that will redeem you.

44 Through his generous grace-bestowing glance, full of the opulence of supreme bliss, he, *swarupa*, radiates all around the bright rays of the powerful true *jnana* that shines as a life of clear understanding. By thinking repeatedly of his red-hued feet,[9] thoughts ultimately ceased completely in the heart.

45 It was the glorious rule of the feet of my Lord which bestowed the lofty life that enabled this slave to become both illustrious and swell up with divine pride. For us, his

[9] In Tamil culture Siva is regarded as being red since the word 'Siva' can mean both 'red' and 'auspicious'. When Muruganar describes Bhagavan as being red, he is often associating or identifying him with Siva.

devotees, nothing needs to be done except the training of the mind to abide in the feet of the Lord.

46 For those who dwell lovingly on the feet of our Lord, the perplexing, illusory, dark delusion in their hearts will perish completely. Is the real nature of the Lord not the flood of grace, the pre-eminent being-consciousness that reveals the real nature of the *jiva* as it actually is in the heart?

47 O mind of mine, die without thinking of anything. If you can't do this, then always think of the feet of the Lord.

Love of the Lord's feet

48 My Lord's feet are the supreme God that I worship. I will not cherish anything else other than those feet. In my Lord's feet are contained in full measure the presiding deity, the holy place and the holy water [*murti*, *sthalam*, and *tirtham*].[10] As the Self they have taken possession of the entirety of my love.

49 If one comes to possess devotion in which there is an upsurge of love towards the Lord's feet of grace, the light of consciousness will swell up in the heart. That light of consciousness, the pure being that flares up, will expand and cover the entire universe as a pure expanse.[11]

50 If one remains detached from the world and labours hard at the feet of the Lord with a love that is full of patience, the

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[10] In the Tamil tradition holy places (*kshetras*) may have up to three key components: the principal temple image, a more general sanctity for the local area, and a holy water feature such as a bathing area or a river. Muruganar is saying that all three are present in the feet of Bhagavan.

[11] The word 'expanse' occurs frequently in these verses, usually as a translation of the Tamil words *vaan* and *veli* and the Sanskrit word *akasa*. Though it is often not explicitly stated, the word 'expanse' generally denotes 'the expanse of consciousness' rather than a physical space.

fortune of spiritual experience in which one merges with grace will surge abundantly, like a river whose flood gates have been opened.

51 Through the splendour and radiance of the feet I saw and knew, by subsiding in the heart, those feet that cannot be seen and known. Through the magnificence of the vision of beholding those feet that I have seen and known, I witnessed the departure and total disappearance of the concepts of the mind that generate differences.

52 The feet of my Lord showed me the way of love towards being-consciousness and ensured that I did not have to struggle with the yoga of breath restraint. Now my Lord's feet of pure being shine in my heart, spreading their light as the vast expanse of grace, having made the darkness of ego-delusion flee.

Bhagavan, feet extended, sitting in Ramanasramam in the 1940s.

The Self

The nature and truth of the Self

53 One's truth is not an illusion like all other things because, even in the absence of those things, the Self still exists.

54 Only the Self, unperceived by the senses, is the reality; it is not anything perceived by the senses as 'different' [from me].

55 Where is 'another' to illuminate the Self through which all else shines?

56 Do not become bewildered by believing yourself to be bound. Know that you are always the never-bound supreme.

57 The Self [*aham*], which is totally free from desires, is the very essence of bliss in which all desires have been fulfilled simultaneously.

58 Those who do not realise the truth of the Self, the source of bliss, are just wasting their time.

Experiencing *Atma-swarupa*

Of all the terms that Bhagavan used to describe the reality that is experienced by the liberated ones, the one that he used the most, and seemed to prefer, was 'Self' (*Atma*). Others such as '*mauna*' (silence), consciousness, the heart, and so on, would be used as alternatives when the implications of those terms were more

appropriate, but 'Self' would always be the predominant term. Why so? I think it was because Bhagavan was always insistent that the nature of reality was not something separate or alien that needed to be reached or experienced. It was, he said, one's inherent true nature, something that could be directly known as one's own truth once erroneous identifications and ideas were dropped.

A compound term that encompassed these ideas, and which was used frequently by both Bhagavan and Muruganar, is *Atma-swarupa*. '*Atma*' denotes the Self while '*swarupa*' can be literally translated as 'one's true nature' or 'one's true form'. The juxtaposition of these two words in one compound emphasises Bhagavan's often-repeated point that one's true nature, the Self, is present at all times as one's inherent reality. When he talked about 'Self-realisation' – one of his most frequently used terms for final liberation – he was speaking about the state wherein one recognises and abides as what one truly is, after abandoning all the self-imposed limitations that mask this ever-present experience.

Sometimes the single word '*swarupa*' is used as a synonym for the Self. '*Swa*' means 'one's own' and '*rupa*', while generally designating 'form', occasionally has a wider implication of 'nature' or 'reality'.

59 The divine duty of abidance in *Atma-swarupa* is not to be avoided with lame excuses.

60 *Atma-swarupa*, pure consciousness, the ultimate truth, is a non-dual oneness, with nothing other than itself that can be dwelt upon. To therefore rise as 'I' and become aware of 'something else' is false [knowledge]. When I realised that 'to be' is the nature of *jnana* and to rise as 'I' and be aware of 'something else' is imagination, I attained peace.

61 Since the triumphant truth – 'You are none of these things, but none of these things exist apart from you' – shines clearly, my heart became full of and dwelt as the supreme expanse of the non-dual *Atma-swarupa*, that which has shone from time immemorial.

62 The immaculate *Atma-swarupa* apparently exists as: mind that splits the one truth through delusion into 'I' and 'this'; the intellect; the ego; and the deluding darkness. However, in reality, it exists as *atita*,[12] transcending them. How then is it possible for the deluded mind to imagine the nature of the Self, saying, 'It is like this'?

63 The ever-present *Atma-swarupa*, one's own nature, is indeed the absolutely empty expanse that flourishes without any limit. Those who have realised that expanse, wholly grace-supreme, as their real 'I' have crossed the ocean of embodied existence, the state of ignorance whose seed is the ego.

64 Be convinced that the painful superimposition, the sorrow of embodied existence, is only for the *jiva*, a wholly mental construct that is confused about its real nature. It does not exist for the *Atma-swarupa*, pure consciousness.

65 The true experience that shines beautifully and which arises following the enquiry 'Who am I?' is the fullness of being. Only that *Atma-swarupa*, the unborn Self, deserves to be united with as the perfect experience.

66 The wise ones possess a generous mind, a mind that exists without clinging to anything. For such people peace is the only thing that, through consciousness, deserves to be experienced with delight in their hearts at all times. Therefore put down firm roots in *Atma-swarupa*, existing as the eternal refuge and goal, in such a way that the miserliness that takes the form of the ego is destroyed and the clarity of *mauna* shines.

67 That which deserves to be known and attained is one's own *Atma-swarupa*. Everything else deserves to be forgotten.

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[12] *Atita* means 'beyond' or 'transcending'. In Bhagavan's teachings and Muruganar's writings it denotes the underlying state that remains when one no longer identifies with the mind and its various states.

My Lord revealed *Atma-swarupa* to me

68 My Lord embraced me, taking the form of the light of consciousness, *Atma-swarupa*, and transformed me into *Atma-swarupa* itself. Having attained through my Lord the experience of the knowledge of *Atma-swarupa*, this whole world became for me *Atma-swarupa*.

69 I saw my Lord, who sees those who resort to him as himself, as my *Atma-swarupa*. From the true perspective of the ultimate truth, the *swarupa* perspective, he is not different from me, and I am not different from him.

Swarupa

70 What is it that shines by its own light like the sun? Only that powerful *swarupa* is real.[13]

71 From the beginning of time it has been the non-dual *Brahman* that has existed as the *swarupa* in the heart of every individual in the form of pure consciousness. Because it is eternally and directly attained, to realise it one merely has to lose the delusion of duality, the rising ego that says, 'I am different and distinct from reality'.

72 What great sufferings people undergo to attain liberation, the *swarupa* that shines if one remains still!

73 In *swarupa*, which is pure knowledge, all the arts and sciences are only ignorance.

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[13] Bhagavan took the traditional advaitic position on what is real and unreal. For something to be real, it must reveal itself without an intermediary. Perceived objects and the external world in general do not pass this reality test since they need an intermediary, the mind, to be aware of their existence. The Self, *swarupa*, is experienced without any intermediate agency.

74 In order to end the birth that comes about by manifesting in a body, realise *swarupa*, the consciousness that has no connection with the body.

75 *Swarupa*, shining as reality and existing as pure consciousness, is *Sivam*, the supreme that gleams, having destroyed time. It is only the deluding ego, the fundamental error, that is distressed by a fear of time and death.

76 This is the nature of the sun of *swarupa* that exists and shines in the heart. Being beyond the mind, it does not fall into the categories of 'is' and 'is not'. Being the real import of the term 'I', and not different from oneself, it has never been seen by anyone as an object perceived by the senses. It abides uniformly as the supreme of supremes, having never, at any time, undergone any change.

77 Know that one's own *swarupa* is the true God which shines, transcending all the gods.

Experiencing *swarupa*, my own real nature

78 The bliss of *swarupa* that shines clearly in the life of those who have seen the real is something unknown to those who see the unreal as real.

79 To abide motionlessly [*summa iruttal*] is the state of *swarupa*, a state in which the *jiva's* nature flourishes as the impartial and eminent supreme. It is the state of abiding as the life of bliss, the bliss of supreme tranquillity, with the three defilements[14] ceasing, having become utterly non-existent.

80 Although from a worldly point of view I am ordinary, from the standpoint of my real nature I am extremely precious.

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[14] In Saiva Siddhanta there are three impurities or defilements known as *malas* that prevent one from experiencing *Sivam*. They are *anava*, which is the ego, karma and *maya*.

Everyone knows the first perspective but, except for me, no one else knows the latter truth.

81 Formerly, I did not see 'the Self' but now I do not see 'myself'.

82 The liberation I have discovered and attained existed all the time in the past as my own nature, even before I discovered it. What actually happened was that the proliferating delusion of mind completely ceased. It was not that my real nature suddenly merged with me as something new.

83 Even before the body leaves me for good I have obtained the perfect attainment of liberation, the supreme state of *Brahman*. The peace of *swarupa*, shining without any sorrow, faultlessly exists forever in my heart as a flood of bliss.

84 In my real nature, free from bondage and liberation, there is neither going nor coming; no waking and sleep that are associated with mind, the delusion. There is not a trace of either auspiciousness or inauspiciousness; there is neither speech nor mind; neither remembering nor forgetting.

85 The unreachable[15] mountain Annamalai, the transcendent *swarupa*, became the reachable mountain in my heart.

86 Having lost the [feeling of] being different [from each other], a wonder that existed only in my past, my father Guru Ramana and his father Arunagiri became non-dually united in my thought-free *swarupa*. May that state abide firmly and shine!

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[15] Annamalai is the Tamil name for Arunachala. It means 'unreachable or unapproachable mountain,' a reference to the puranic story in which Brahma and Vishnu failed to find the ends of the infinite column of light that Siva manifested himself as. Siva subsequently condensed himself into the visible form of Arunachala so that devotees would not be dazzled by the brilliance of the column.

The perspective of the Self

When the individual self that obscures the true Self is discovered to be non-existent, all the problems and desires that had attached themselves to that individual self vanish. But that is not the only thing that disappears. What also goes is the idea that there is an external world that is cognized and known by an individual 'I'. While it was still existing, the individual self perceived a self-projected external world that appeared to be separate and distinct from it. When that individual self disappears at the moment of realisation, the world is known and directly experienced to be an indivisible and uncaused appearance in one's own real Self. In that state one experiences its perfection and wholeness, aware that everything that goes on within it is an unfolding of divine power and grace.

87 Now that the world has attained the lustre of the divine, I am no longer rattled and mentally perturbed by it. As I perceive the world itself to be the presence of *Sivam*, a view that causes an overflow of joy, what other form of prosperity is needed for me?

88 Through a consciousness that possessed *unmani bhava* [the pure state that exists between waking and sleep][16] I saw in my heart the excellence of the true reality, *Sadasivam*, as nothing but the Self. The false duality that arises through an ignoble mind no longer exists. Even to say 'I saw' is just a standard and conventional statement. What exists and shines is only One.

89 The three bodies, whose forms veil us, are burnt to ashes in the fire that is the vision of *Brahman*,[17] the perspective

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[16] Bhagavan occasionally said that the Self can sometimes be experienced in the fraction of a second gap between the sleep state and the waking state. In Saiva Siddhanta philosophy this is known as 'the pure state'. When it is held permanently, this is liberation, Self-knowledge.

[17] The three bodies are the gross, the subtle and the causal. The 'gross'

of *jnana*. Hence, those who have obtained the direct experience of *Brahman* will at all times remain immutably as that *Brahman*, without swerving in the least from that state.

90 There are no flaws in blemishless *swarupa*, the shining of pure being, because the world actually glows as light, being the flooding grace of the feet whose nature is compassion and unrejectable consciousness. Flaws in the world therefore only exist when ignorance, the mind, appears.

91 Those who have realised the truth will abide firmly [in that truth, realising] that there is no fault in creation, but only in one's view of it.

92 The vision of *swarupa* shines unobscured at all times in a firm, uninterrupted manner in the heart through a mind that has settled into a life of supreme devotion. As a consequence, peace flows continuously like a river.

93 In the truth of Siva *swarupa*, which should be clearly known, there is no fault that can be ascribed to it. The only fault worthy of being mentioned is the error of obsessing with the false that spreads out in those who experience mental confusion.

94 Everything that happens in this world occurs in an orderly way, having been ordained by the power of consciousness that is full of impartial justice and perfect virtue. Because of this, for those who possess the vision that arises from remaining united with God, there is only order in this world, and no impropriety.

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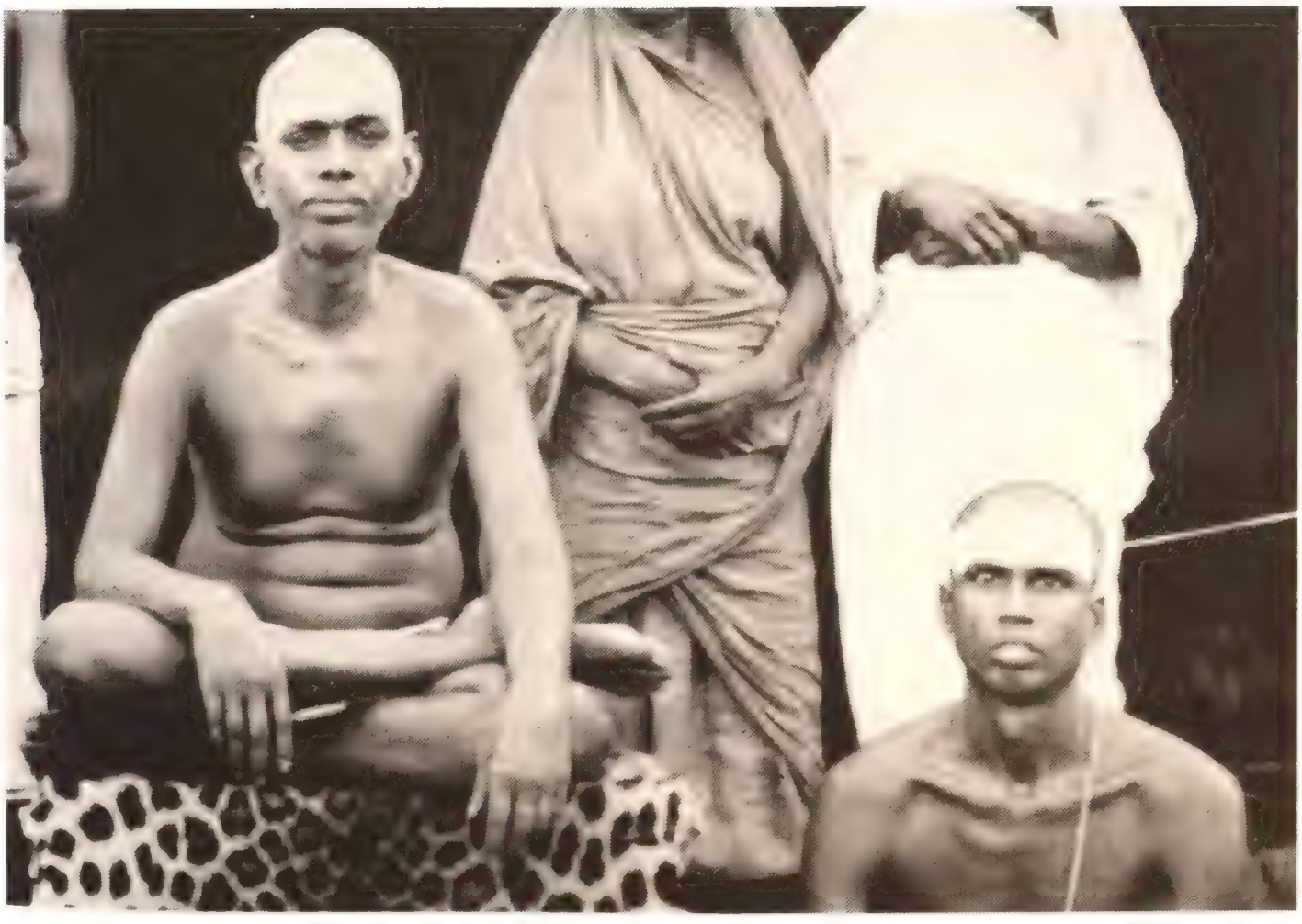
is the physical body; the 'subtle' is the body one occupies during dreams; and the 'causal' is the state of the individual 'I' during deep sleep. *Brahman* is the impersonal absolute of Hinduism and corresponds to other terms for this state such as 'the Self'.

95 For those in whom *swarupa* shines following the cessation and destruction of that sense of limitation, the ego that restricts consciousness to the perishable body, there is nothing to desire, to be afraid of, or to be ashamed of, since the delusion of duality has been lost.

96 For the *jnani* who has merged in the pure Self that is the truth of the first person 'I', everything is only good. Nothing is harmful because he does not have the connection to the false ego that is the creative cause of scorching mental distress.

97 If one realises that all forms are forms of Siva, that all actions are the doings of Siva, and that everything is wholly *Sivam*, the mind, feeling ashamed to label some 'virtuous' and others 'wicked', will become silent. Everything that is perceived will be free from flaws.



Muruganar sitting with Bhagavan

The Presence of my Lord

The presence (*sannidhi*) of the Lord is the zone in which his power and authority can be felt. Geographically it denotes the physical space around him, the area where devotees can see and interact with him. However, since the Lord abides in and as the heart, the *sannidhi* is also accessible to anyone who directs attention inwards towards the Guru within. Bhagavan said once that it is this *sannidhi* (rather than the Guru himself) that is responsible for fulfilling the desires of devotees who express them, and for granting experiences to those who are attuned to it. The *jnani* merely abides as the Self, but through that Self-abidance an energy field, a presence, is created that takes care of all the needs of those who approach him.

The nature of the presence

98 The grace of the *jnana* Guru, the embodiment of the supreme Self, establishes disciples in the state of the Self. Therefore, the mysterious truth of the presence of Ramana, the Self, is just mind-free abidance in the Self.

99 My Lord abides uninterruptedly as wholly consciousness in my heart, endowing it with distinction. Through his grace I clearly realised that though he, the Lord of the Dancing Hall,[18] appears to dance, he does not actually move in the slightest, though he does cause everything else to dance by his mere presence.

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[18] This is a reference to Siva in the form of the dancing Nataraja, the presiding deity of the Chidambaram Temple.

100 Those who have reached the presence of the silent Guru-form, which is enveloped by the unobstructed manifestation of grace, will be blessed with the fortune that is the experience of Self-abidance, the fruit that is both beyond the reach of and impossible to taste by those deceitful ones who are governed by the wicked ego-mind.

101 Both celestials and human beings come into the presence of our Guru-Lord, the embodiment of *jnana*, and prostrate to him. Through his grace-bestowing gaze they are freed from the 'I am the body' delusion, the ego, and come to possess clear *jnana* in their hearts. They leave his presence with a blooming countenance, full of the light of *mauna*.

102 He is the one who truly owns me. Those who remain seated in his grace-radiating presence, with consciousness focused inward, will experience supreme tranquillity welling up and overflowing in their hearts. Will those who have experienced this peace even think about the many enjoyments of this world?

103 It is an error to term as an 'ashram' the immediate presence of our mother Ramana, the blissful one who establishes the beings of the world in the state of waking sleep[19] in such a way that the great weariness that arises from the triple torments ends. His presence is, in truth, a fierce battlefield on which the lion, his glance, gets angry with and kills those multiple rutting elephants, the egos of devotees.

104 While concealing their form and remaining invisible to human beings, even the gods of the heavens very eagerly

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[19] 'Waking sleep' (*jagrat-sushupti*) is a cryptic term that often appears in Bhagavan's teachings. In *Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham*, verse 32, Bhagavan wrote: 'To those who experience waking, dreaming and sleep states, there is beyond these a state of waking sleep that is given the name of "the fourth state (*turiya*)".'

cherish the divine presence of the Guru who abides in consciousness-the-supreme, the *mauna* that radiates the light of *jnana* which destroys the 'I am the body' limitation.[20]

Experiencing the presence of my Lord

105 I came into the close proximity of my Lord, the supreme being who reigned over me by making me submit to him. Through the play of his grace immeasurable being, the transcendental supreme, shone more clearly to me than the world.

106 Because the veiling mind completely and untraceably vanished in the presence of my Lord, the *swarupa* who shines as the light of the heart, I disport myself, immersed in the flood of bliss in which there are no afflictions, not even of the size of a sesame seed.

107 I prostrated to my Lord and sat down there. In his presence the innate beauty of *swarupa*, abiding as the ambrosia that is full of coolness, brought me under its captivating spell, causing thought waves to cease completely and making my heart ecstatic.

108 After I prostrated to him, he placed me in the supreme state in which I did not have to bow to anyone else. The sole *tapas* I now perform is paying attention to the powerful presence of the wielder of supreme grace, he who is surrounded by many devotees.

109 The truth that the presence of my Lord, the pure supreme *swarupa*, free of divisions, is present everywhere, shines in my heart. Therefore, without being perplexed by imagining

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[20] Muruganar wrote an explanatory note to this verse: 'Hence those who go to his presence should approach it with a devotion coupled with awe, humility and submissiveness so that they do not commit any impropriety either towards the Lord or towards the gods.'

that he is here, or he is there, I rested in the Self as love and *jnana*, without the slightest perturbation.

110 Because I reached the feet of grace of my Lord whose name is Annamalai, I attained the true benefit: the realisation that the world in which I live is only the divine presence of my Lord who governed me by transforming me into exquisite-tasting ambrosial *swarupa*.

111 In the presence of the one in whom I found refuge the *tapas* of true *jnana* took place, sharply focused in my heart, and easily bore fruit. For those who have been blessed to have close association with grace in that presence, something that is revered even by the celestials, is there anything that will not fructify fully?

112 Through the triumph of grace brought about by the valour of true *jnana* my Lord completely dispelled from my heart the longing for pleasures of the false world. In his presence I clearly realised my true nature as the red-hued sun of true *jnana* that made the word 'ignorance' have no meaning.

The location of the presence

113 In whatever places I might venture, my Lord's presence is fully flourishing in all those locations, even before I reach them. As I have on my head the dust of my Lord's feet of grace, I lack absolutely nothing.

114 Enrapturing my heart, my Lord merged with me as the supremely blissful consciousness that surges as an amalgamation of both love and *jnana*. Since, for me, his feet shine in all places, 'here', 'there' and 'everywhere' are all the divine presence of my Lord.

115 The *swarupa* abides as a unitary whole, extending everywhere with a presence that is impossible to restrict to 'here' or

'there'. The *jiva* that has experienced this *swarupa* in the heart with the aid of the consciousness that is the light of unalloyed grace will attain a fear-free majesty.

116 Because my mind remains subsided and motionless in all places in the same way it does in the presence of Ramana, for me every place in this world, girdled by the waters of the ocean, is the vast ashram of Lord Ramana, eagerly sought by even the host of celestials.

117 Both time and space appear as mere concepts in the *swarupa* of my Lord who is the totally perfect and infinite eye of grace. So, wherever I go, he too becomes the one Self there, making it impossible for me to forsake him and go anywhere else.

Muruganar (right) sitting with Bhagavan.

Consciousness

In Sri Ramana's teachings consciousness (*chit*) is not the antonym of unconsciousness. It is the underlying state of being that is one's own Self, the substratum on which appear and disappear the world and all mental states. For the *jnani* consciousness is experienced and known as the reality that remains whether one is awake or asleep, whether the world is present or not.

Consciousness is one

118 Consciousness does not exist apart from that-which-is. Know that consciousness is that-which-is, the reality.

119 Consciousness does not exist separately from *ullam* [the Heart]. Know that Heart also does not exist apart from consciousness.

120 True *jnanis* who have known consciousness in the heart declare that pure consciousness is the 'consciousness of consciousness' only for the sake of those deluded ones who do not know pure consciousness. However, in the consciousness of true *jnanis* who have known consciousness, there never were two consciousnesses. That which is termed 'consciousness' is, in truth, only the non-dual supreme reality, *Brahman*.

121 Knowing consciousness is *jnana*. However, consciousness does not comprise two – knower and known. The truth of knowing consciousness is that one shines as consciousness, freed from the rising ego.

122 Those rare ones with a pure 'I' will find through being-consciousness that the 'one Self' is the truth. The notion that there are two selves derives from the power of delusion that, through the 'I am the body' feeling, does not let one realise the truth of oneself.

123 Only the consciousness that knows neither its own nature nor anything else is the real 'I'.

124 The supreme space of consciousness, whose nature is condensed supreme bliss, is alone the true *padam* [the feet] that are extremely difficult to see.

Being-consciousness ('I am')

Though the Self is often described as *sat-chit-ananda* (being-consciousness-bliss) both Bhagavan and Muruganar frequently omit the 'bliss' component when they describe the nature of the Self as being-consciousness. This section has several general verses on *sat-chit*, being-consciousness. After that, Muruganar writes about his own experience of this state.

125 That great experience, the knowledge of one's real nature, is only being-consciousness, that which reveals itself when one remains still. This experience of rejoicing in *mauna* will become clear as one's own nature, without it needing to have any connection with illusory, degraded and alien sense objects.

126 Do not embrace the dream-world you encounter, regarding it as a source of happiness, because if you do, sorrow will follow closely behind. *Swarupa*, being-consciousness devoid of the manifestation of this unreal dream in which the duality of sorrow and happiness operate, is the bondage-free supreme whose form is unsurpassed bliss.

127 The bliss of being-consciousness that springs up as one's own nature in the heart, even when no sense objects are

being enjoyed, is impossible to experience unless the ghostly dance of the ego that aggressively thrusts itself to the forefront comes to an end and the heart becomes clear.

128 *Sivam* is only the pure being-consciousness, shining through itself, as solely itself.

Attaining being-consciousness

129 I realised my nature to be mere being-consciousness in which there are no objects for which I can experience desire. If the heart attains clarity, living the glorious life of grace, the other deluding life of the senses becomes only a dream generated by the power of illusion of the mind, that fragmented entity.

130 Because the flood of the experience of being-consciousness has arisen extensively and identically within and without, the scorching desert heat of birth actually became for me the cool moon that spreads the flood of peace.

131 Since there is no other ultimate goal and benefit for the *jiva* except being-consciousness, I unwaveringly maintained the practice of paying attention to that being-consciousness, *mauna*, and attained as a result a life in which I never forget the reality.

132 You resurrected me in the heart through your consciousness, I who had died repeatedly by relying on my [individual] consciousness. Your consciousness, which I attained as the ambrosia that bestows immortality upon my soul, is never-ending true life.

133 I am not in any location. All of space and time operate within me like shadows. From the bodily point of view, I appear to act as though I am enmeshed with them, but I never forget my limitation-free real nature, being-consciousness, the substratum, and get caught in concepts of space and time.

Chit-para (consciousness-the-supreme)

134 Who indeed can make *chit-para* shine? Expelling concepts is all that one can do.

135 In *Sivam*, existing as *chit-para*, all the sciences that involve differences, and which are therefore concepts, will disappear.

136 Nowhere is there a 'there' within *swarupa*, consciousness-the-supreme, that which exists as the 'here' everywhere.

137 The experience of *mauna*, the honey-like ambrosial grace that is *chit-para*, did not stop with engulfing me as the firmament [of consciousness]. It unceasingly pressed me down in the heart, not allowing me to rise as 'I' by forgetting it, transforming me into itself.

138 Because the heart, that strong fortress, became for me a firmly held possession, the struggle of the deceitful mind died and ceased completely. The life of *chit-para* merged with me in a palpable way, endowing me with the right to rule the empire of *mauna*-grace, that *jnana* which is free from afflicting mental movements.

139 The ego-mind that formerly rose as 'I' drowned in *chit-para*, the endless divine silence that is grace. As I delighted in the supreme rule of the unique empire of liberation, the notional rule of the kingdom of the mind, something that is wholly fabricated, became tasteless for me.

140 Having realised that all my thoughts are just concepts of the thinking mind, I stopped thinking. Now, in the pure expanse of the light that is both the flood of grace-silence and *chit-para*, the *Sivam* that shines clearly as my own existence in the heart, I see nothing else.

141 Through my Lord who is totally beyond compare I realised

that the harmonious relationship between us exists and shines eternally, in a non-dual way, in the grace that is *chit-para*.

The light of consciousness

Consciousness is often seen in metaphorical terms as the light that dispels the darkness of ignorance. It is the luminous inner glow of Self-knowledge, the state of the Guru who reveals it, and the radiating and enlightening transmission that takes place in the Guru-disciple encounter.

142 Know this clearly in your heart: that which is repeatedly referred to as 'light' by *jnanis* is only the light of being-consciousness. The light of consciousness, clear and tranquil, is alone the real light, whereas the light that associates with one as a sense perception is an illusory one.

143 To enable the experience of Self-abidance to arise, meditation should solely cherish the light of pure consciousness, with the delusion of mind completely cleared away. Thinking of other things can be done later.

144 The supreme goddess is the divine light of *swarupa*-consciousness, shining only in the hearts of those eminent ones who have subsided within, having realised that abiding as reality is the true life. Though I was utterly degraded through the frenzy of the ego, she arose in my heart as the experience of *mauna*, overwhelming me as the extremely pure firmament that is nothing but itself, the Self.

145 Through the rising of the ego, which is a disgrace, I did not in former times see the unique reality that exists as the light of consciousness in the heart. Through the compassionate grace of the one who is the very form of unsullied *turiya*, and who exists as the expanse [of consciousness], I was freed from the rising ego and came to know that reality.

146 To know the Self there is no light other than the Self. Self-nature itself is the true light of consciousness, pure grace. Is it not through the Self-nature that all manifestation – beginning with the 'I' that has risen first and including everything else that follows – shines?

147 It is ignorance to search externally for one's *swarupa* which shines in the heart as the light of pure consciousness.

My Lord is the light of consciousness

148 My Lord, who never gets divided, is present in consciousness as consciousness.

149 Do not ignore even slightly the light of consciousness. This light of consciousness is the essential nature of our extremely great Lord. There is nothing that exists apart from the light of consciousness. The whole of manifestation is only the light of consciousness, the glory of grace.

150 My Lord stood in my heart as the expanse of the light of consciousness, enabling being-consciousness, one's own ever-present nature, to merge with me. Those who have reached his presence will obtain in full measure the difficult-to-obtain, direct and authentic experience of true *jnana*.

151 I obtained the life of having an identical nature to you, the light of being which swallowed me into the vast expanse [of consciousness]. Through the arising of *mauna* brought about by the clear experience of pure *Sivam*, I was freed in my heart from impetuosity.

I realised pure consciousness to be my own Self

When Muruganar prefixes the word 'consciousness' with 'pure', he is generally alluding to the prevailing and underlying consciousness that remains when neither the mind nor physical manifestation are experienced as being separate from that consciousness.

152 Both relative knowledge and ignorance departed and vanished when I realised myself to be the form of pure consciousness in the heart. My true state now shines in such a way that the entirety of the 'non-Self' does not exist separately from my consciousness.

153 When I am shining brilliantly as the pure consciousness that transcends the mind, what can concepts do to me?

154 I exist as consciousness; I have nothing to know; I am not a knower.

155 Because my state exists as the unique and sole substratum for the world, and has no other support, my consciousness will not become a dependant slave to anything. Consequently, it will not feel jaded and experience sorrow.

156 My Lord lit the lamp of *jnana* that made me subside into and abide as pure consciousness, his feet. In the feeling of supreme bliss that sprang forth in the heart through that abidance, infatuation and the consequent longings came to an end.

157 Let what goes go. Let what comes come. Through the experience of pure consciousness that is attained through devotion, I realised that I have absolutely no connection with these phenomena. I settled into peace full of the quality of vigilant attention.

158 Peace accompanied by a shining of being that is clarity of mind arose because my *swarupa* glows as pure consciousness. As a result, my torments subsided and the enjoyment of refreshing ambrosia surged forth in my heart.

Worshipping consciousness

159 It is wisdom to know and worship the Self, pure being-consciousness, through an intellect [*buddhi*] that has

become completely tranquil and which observes the virtuous conduct of abiding in being. How wondrous it is that even I, an ignorant one obsessed with the false, have been blessed with the fortune of worshipping being, *swarupa*, through this tranquil *buddhi*.

160 The Lord who exercised dominion over this slave shines in the heart as my own nature, not different from me. I worship him as my own nature through the Self-experience that shines as being-consciousness.

161 Those who worship only consciousness through consciousness will attain the experience of their real nature in which they shine as pure consciousness. Those who desire the alien objects of the non-Self through their [individualised] consciousness have ignored the supreme, being-consciousness [and therefore will not attain that experience].

162 The god worshipped is pure consciousness. The worshipper is concept-free pure consciousness. The worshipping is pure consciousness, full of reality. The state in which all the three have become one alone is the nature of true devotion.

The world is consciousness

Though 'pure consciousness' generally denotes the state in which awareness of the world and the mind has been lost, or in which they never existed, Muruganar and Bhagavan have stated that the mind and the world can also be legitimately viewed as appearances within consciousness. They are unreal or non-existent when they are seen or experienced as separate entities, but real when their true nature is known to be the underlying consciousness in which they manifest.

163 As the totality of manifestation does not exist independently of consciousness, only those who have known the truth of consciousness are the learned who know everything.

However, all those who perceive the world, an imaginary appearance in consciousness, taking it to be real through an understanding that sees differences, and who experience sorrow as a result – they are in truth ignorant and have an erroneous understanding.

164 It is actually the one Self, the great Lord whose nature is immense consciousness, who exists as the multiplicity of beings. You should know that the binding delusion is the ego which, for no useful purpose and through being confused, muddles up the one into 'I' and 'he'.

165 If the mind becomes clear, the world will become clear as consciousness-the-supreme. The world does not exist apart from the mind.

166 Those who have known consciousness will see all manifestation as mere consciousness.

167 I clearly knew without a shadow of doubt that this entire world was only an expression of my Lord who is pure consciousness. As I consequently came to possess divine and genuine love for all the beings of the world, that love shone as *Sivam* in my heart.

Attaining *Sivam*

168 [The great ones] say that taking a deathless birth is to die and be born in *Sivam*, which shines illustriously.

169 Only to the extent that *Sivam* is dwelt upon will useless thoughts depart from the mind and cease.

170 O soul of mine, you have suffered unending scorching torment by wallowing perpetually in the world. If you want to free yourself completely from this torment, which is the struggle of the whirling mind, remain firmly immersed in the cool Ganga, *Sivam*, whose nature is being-consciousness.

171 In the shining of pure being, pure consciousness, the ghostly dance of the mind, the veiling defect that rises as 'I', does not exist at all. Therefore, with the ego, whose tendency is to engage in dry and profitless disputation, destroyed completely, merge in the state of *mauna* that shines as the expanse of grace-supreme. This is rejoicing in the ocean of supreme *Sivam*.

172 Through the practice of paying attention to supreme *Sivam*, my mind turned away from that which is seen and ceased to value the perceived world. It now exists as the clear river of pure consciousness.

173 Because the experience of the savour of devotion to *Sivam*, the Self which surges as the light that illumines the intellect, has seized me, worldly enjoyments, the agitation brought about by wallowing in the midst of the concepts of the deluded mind, became detestable, like unsalted gruel.

174 Realising the body to be a false association, I took upon myself firm and real association with auspicious *Sivam* in order that the afflictions of birth be abolished completely and the life of grace, the life of supreme bliss that is the wealth of *Atma-swarupa*, be attained.

175 I became identical with *Sivam* by seeing *Sivam* nature with the eye of divine grace that is the very nature of *Sivam*. Though there is no *triputi*[21] that exists distinct from *Sivam*, the form of *Sivam* is not one of the things perceptible to us.

176 The splendour of *Sivam*, full of grandeur, abides as consciousness-the-supreme. Because its powerful rule completely swallowed me up in the heart and concealed 'my' consciousness within itself, ending it forever, it became for me the god of death that destroyed my very existence.

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[21] *Triputis* are 'knower, knowing and known' and 'seer, seeing and seen'.

177 Because the *Sivam* that exercised its rule over me has now merged with me as 'I', I am nothing but supreme bliss, the fullness of being-consciousness. Because the ego-mind, the buried root, has perished, I am free from ignorance. I am free from the misery that arose from the mind with which I had formerly assumed a connection.

Sadasivam

178 The Guru, the embodiment of being-consciousness, the *Sadasivam* who exercised sovereignty over me in an appropriate way, instantly revealed the treasure of grace stored up in my heart so that it could be clearly apprehended by my intellect. The profitless delusion of pining [for other things] that had made me grow weary perished.

179 *Sadasivam* reigned over me by incinerating the unceasing delusion that is the ego-ghost to destruction in the fire of true *jnana*, ending its assertive rising and transforming me, a dog, into itself. I clearly realised myself to be absolute being, *Sadasivam*, and became the nature of supreme bliss.

180 *Swarupa*, which is nothing but *mauna*, is *Sadasivam*, the being-consciousness that shines as the fully perfect supreme reality. It is not experienced except through a peaceful mind [*santa vritti*]. Therefore, unless the rising ego is paralysed and destroyed at its root, it will be utterly impossible to apprehend that state of pure being.

181 He is the Lord who sustains me in such a way that I have none of those trivial anxieties, such as longing and pining [for something], that arise through mental activity. He is the Lord who flourishes in the heart as the life of living as *Sadasivam*. He is the Lord who reveals in the heart, 'Here exists the state of being that confers true benefit!'

182 By abiding in *Sadasivam*, being-consciousness, as that *Sivam* I clearly realised my true state. For me that transcendent

state that is the life of *jnana* flourishes and shines as my own nature, without ever faltering.

My Lord showed me *Sivam*

183 Unfortunately, instead of prospering by merging in the sleep of *Sivam*, I remained ruined, trapped in the life that is the delusory dream of the imagination. But then my Lord, making *Sivam* shine in my heart, enabling it to become my focus, bestowed in my mind the sleep of great attentiveness.[22]

184 The auspicious *Sivam* that moved about as the *jnana*-Guru now shines clearly within my heart as the lamp of *jnana*. The radiance of that light of *jnana* made the imagined difference between myself and *Sivam* end, making me realise in a faultless fashion, through experience, that I am indeed that *Sivam*.

185 My Lord distilled me into someone who lazes away in *Sivam*, ensuring that I do not remain as a useless idler, ruining myself [in the world]. Free of thoughts, I now live steadily and joyfully in the form of absolute peace in the *swarupa* that exists as the residue, the substratum.

186 In *Sivam*, being-consciousness-bliss that shines by itself, of its own accord, there is no 'other' such as 'I' and 'this'. That *Sivam* shone as my own nature through the glance of the one who arose to grant the boon of firm true *jnana*.

187 *Sivam* permeates everything everywhere as the expanse [of consciousness]. Through the manner in which the power of Bhagavan's grace settled in me I saw it to be the same

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[22] 'The sleep of great attentiveness' is the same as 'waking-sleep' (*jagrat-sushupti*) that was defined earlier. It arises when one abides in the underlying *turiya* state on which the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping come and go.

expanse that shines brightly in my heart as nothing other than my own nature.

I am now *Sivam*

188 Wherever my mind might proceed, that which shines identically in all those places is the dominating supreme truth. In the solitary *Sivam* that exists and shines identically and harmoniously as being-consciousness, the supreme, nothing else exists except as a concept.

189 The nature of my own reality, shining as the attribute-free state of *mauna*, is such that none of the *gunas*[23] cling to it. Therefore, in the experience of *swarupa,* which is wholly the solitary *Sivam* shining as condensed consciousness, there is not the slightest affliction caused by mental agitation.

190 What should I think about, I for whom there is no 'other'? Since consciousness itself is non-dual being, within me, I who am consciousness, anything alien to me is false. I abide as stillness in *Sivam*, thought-free, and with the mind dead.

191 *Sivam*, shining as the unalloyed *swarupa* which no deception can approach, exists eternally, firmly established within my heart. In the ultimate state of perfect *mauna* in which the universe has departed, how does it matter to me what exists and what ceases to exist?

192 Since the King of Tiruchuzhi[24] shines in the heart as the subtle eye of *turiya swarupa*, I saw, following the destruction of my ego, that absolutely reproach-free supreme *Sivam*, silence. Now I do not see anything that is different from it.

193 In the gold of *Sivam*, which prospers and shines as itself in

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[23] The three *gunas* (*rajas*, *tamas* and *sattva*) are alternating qualities of the mind.

[24] Tiruchuzhi is the birthplace of Ramana Maharshi.

itself, I experienced my own real nature, losing the status of having become a [golden] ornament known as 'I'. How can I describe the grandeur of the experience of *mauna* in which I abide as consciousness-the-supreme?

Suttarivu

Sivam is the consciousness that sees or recognises nothing other than itself. In Saiva Siddhanta texts the false consciousness that has split itself into a seer and a seen is known as *suttarivu*. *Arivu* is the Tamil word for 'consciousness'. Since *arivu* is also sometimes used to denote the word *jnana*, it can also be translated as 'knowledge'. The *suttu* prefix means 'pointed at' or 'indicated'. *Suttarivu* is the knowledge that is acquired when an individual knower knows objects, such as thoughts and perceptions, and it is also the process by which that false knowledge is acquired. *Suttarivu* vanishes when the individual knower subsides into *Sivam* and disappears.

194 Consciousness that has become clear is itself *sat-chit-ananda* [being-consciousness-bliss]. Is it not because of the bewilderment of [individual] consciousness that one suffers, trapped in the ignorance, the *suttarivu* that only pays attention to alien objects? One's true dharma, therefore, is to ensure that consciousness becomes clear.

195 When the 'I am the body' ego that limits consciousness to the body dies, the mind shines as pure consciousness alone. In such a mind *suttarivu*, the attention that merges in concepts that are essentially false and fragmented, has been lost completely. As a result, that [mind] is the reality, *Sivam*, wholly happiness.

196 Do not mentally whirl about, having faith in *suttarivu*. *Suttarivu* is the imagination of the deluding mind whose capacity for creating deception has no limit. If you enquire with *suttarivu*, Self-nature will not be revealed. It will only

shine if you abide, without *suttarivu*, as pure consciousness in the Self.

197 Because the state of *swarupa*-consciousness surges without the objectifying consciousness that is associated with the mind, that consciousness flourishes and shines in itself and as itself, without any perceptible object existing. In that state I experienced the liberation that is a completely empty expanse.

My Lord ended my *suttarivu*

198 My Lord wanted me to attain the experience of abiding as the shining *swarupa* by freeing my consciousness from the perspective that viewed moving shadowy forms [objects], enabling my heart to cling constantly to the unmoving permanent reality. To accomplish this he burnt up the *suttarivu* of my base mind, totally transforming it into the sacred ash of *swarupa*.

199 Because delusion, the ego-mind that roams about through *suttarivu* and which is the cause of sorrow, is dead and gone, I now abide in the heart, mentally motionless, with nothing alien to me that I can wonder about, long for, or dislike.

200 Unable to tolerate the sight of the countenance of the Siva-consciousness that merged with me, my individual consciousness departed, hating its company. Following the dawn of the sun of *jnana*, one wakes up from the sleep of ignorance. Will the dream that occurred in the middle of the sleep of ignorance continue once one wakes up from that sleep?

201 Because the form of the ego, the objectifying consciousness that cherishes only differences, has perished, what is described here is not a vision that comprises nothing but thoughts, but the experience of *swarupa*. It shines as the radiance of consciousness within which the longing for

grace, [once an] ever-increasing desire, has become utterly becalmed.[25]

Murugnar, 1960s

[25] Once *swarupa* has been experienced and known to be one's own Self, the desire for grace – an idea that something is needed to attain a different state of being – vanishes completely.

The Nature of my Lord

The true nature of my Lord

202 The true nature of my Lord who reigned over me as the pellucid, true, divine grace, destroying the imaginary differences engendered by the delusory ego-mind, is *swarupa*, shining as the Heart. It cannot be thought about, nor indeed does it need to be thought about.

203 He has neither a place nor a name; neither parents nor relatives. He has no deliberative thoughts in his heart, nor a focus for his attention. He has neither delusion nor clear understanding. He exists truly as consciousness-the-supreme, the unalloyed *Sivam*. The real nature of the noble one is only *mauna*, being-consciousness-bliss.

204 Though he appears as the Lord whose glance dispels and annihilates the original disease as well as uprooting and destroying the desire and fear that arise through the false feeling of duality, he is indeed the expanse, the transcendent *Sivam* that exists as the residue which cannot be rejected after all else departs through the process of 'not this'.

205 Our Lord who exercised dominion over me is an extremely great warrior who possesses the valour of pure grace. To those who have known him, he is the one Self, one's own nature that cannot be rejected. To those others who do not know him as the real import of the word 'I', he is the transcendental one, beyond their grasp.

206 Just because our Lord is easily accessible, even to those who are ordinary, do not fall into the simple-minded understanding of regarding him to be like an ordinary person. *Jnanis* will realise in their heart that his [our Lord's] real *jnana* nature is to shine as the expanse, saturated with the light of consciousness.

207 My Lord exists as my own real Self, that state of existence which is superior to all other states. This unique true state which he graciously declared to be 'That state … acceptable to all'[26] shines prominently through him in my heart. As a consequence, all the other states have faded away, becoming false.

208 Like the [shade-giving] celestial tree [*karpaga*] in a harsh and burning-hot desert terrain, it is his intrinsic nature to protect those who have merged with his feet. However, the real nature [of my Lord], the tranquil *Sadasivan*,[27] is only impartiality because his heart is free from likes and dislikes by virtue of his [non-dual] perspective.

209 Since my Lord exists wholly as the one non-dual Self, beyond the reach of the mind, he will not be caught in the arguments of duality and non-duality, which are concepts of the mind. His nature only comes within the reach of the direct experience of *swarupa* in which *suttarivu*, the deluding mind, the concept-generating power, has been destroyed.

The glory and greatness of my Lord

210 My Lord, the fullness present as the unbounded supreme of supremes! Neither in the mountains nor in the sky nor in

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[26] A phrase from *Ulladu Narpadu*, verse three.

[27] When the final letter of *Sadasivam* changes to an 'n' (*Sadasivan*), it denotes a male person who is the embodiment of *Sadasivam*. The final 'n' in Tamil is a grammatical ending that denotes a man.

anything else do I see the glory of you who established me in the state of *mauna*, deathless being-consciousness.

211 Who can describe his glory as 'like this' or 'like that'? Even before one thinks of him, he manifests in the heart. Though he appears to stand before me as a human being, he has entered my heart, expanded as pure consciousness, and remains there as my *swarupa*.

212 The greatness of our Lord who possesses immeasurable grandeur is that the more one rejoices in it, the more one remains unsatiated. Dwelling on it in an immeasurable way will enable the attainment of the *jnana* experience as the ambrosial fountain in devotees' hearts.

213 His true state, full of greatness, is *swarupa* that shines as pure consciousness, far superior to relative consciousness. To those who solely cherish it, my Lord will, as an expression of the esteem in which he holds our non-dual association, grant the extremely subtle perspective in which *swarupa* is experienced through an inward-turned mind-faculty.

214 He [Sri Ramana] remained blissfully where he was [without moving away from Arunachala]. Through the power of his extraordinary *tapas*, he brought together in a fitting way the people of the world into his divine presence and expelled their impure *vasana* [the *anava mala*].[28]

215 Our *Sadguru* Lord is not a mere scholar. He is a scholar of excellence in the extremely pure true *jnana*. He is the fire of true *jnana*, whose glance makes the minds of mere scholars, possessed by the mischievous and profitless ego, stand in awe.

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[28] 'The impure *vasana*,' the *anava mala*, is the ego, the idea that one is an individual person functioning inside a body.

216 He [Sri Ramana] is extremely clever, highly accomplished in the speech of grace, the speech of *Brahma-swarupa* that is actually without speech and breath. He is the manly one, possessing in abundance the power of *mauna*-consciousness that stilled the mouths of those fierce tigers, the envious disputants bent on arguments.

217 Without anyone different from himself as his Guru on this earth, he became the very essence of *jnana* that flared up and spontaneously shone forth within himself as himself, enabling him to become the incomparable Guru for this entire world. This wonderful fact is indeed the glory of my Lord.

218 He possesses the infinite glory of abiding as the expanse of grace in my heart, ensuring that I, his companion, experience no limitations. Becoming the treasure of *jnana*, he filled my heart to the brim while gliding over my mind as the moon of peace.

Experiencing the true nature of my Lord

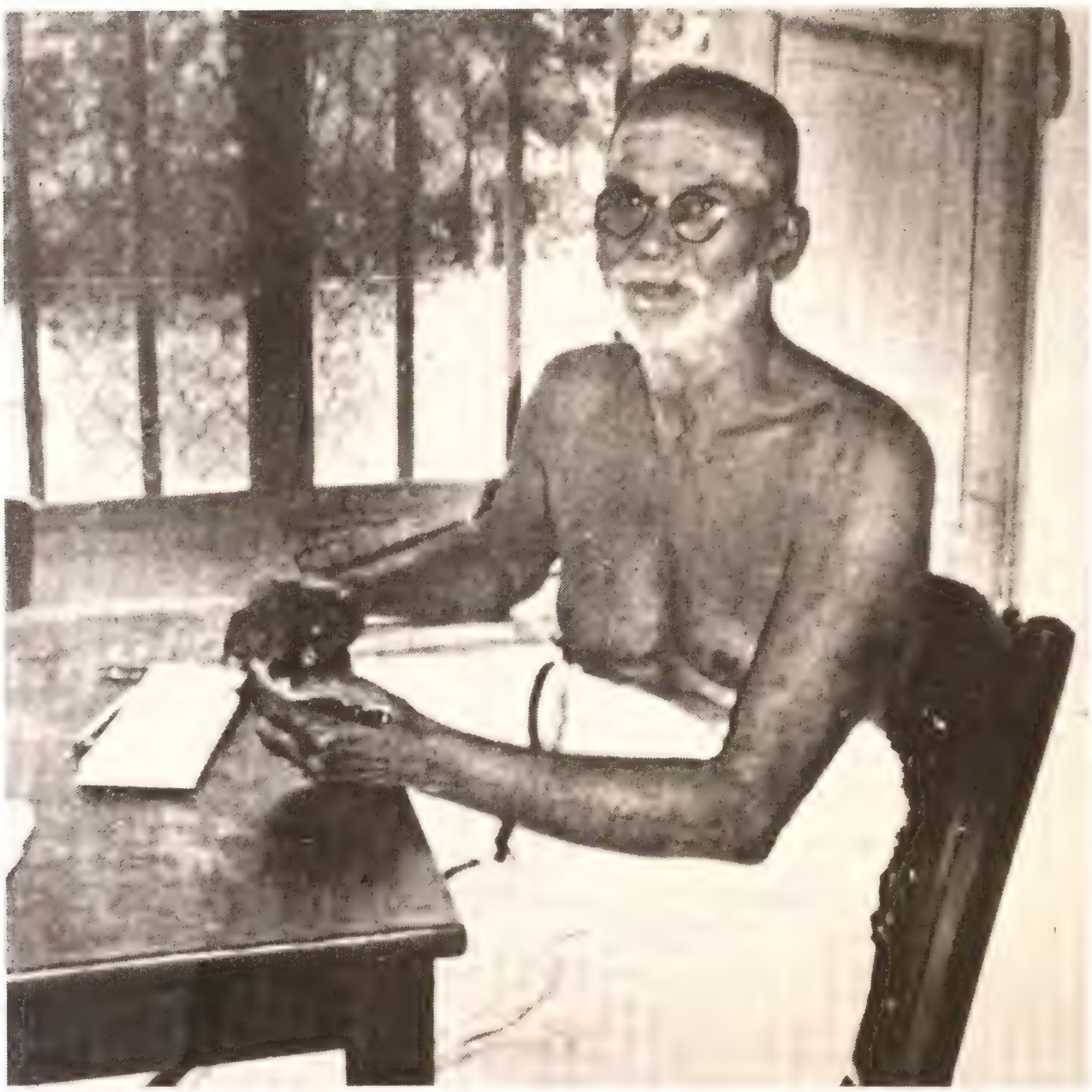
219 Abiding in the heart, my *jnana*-possessing owner clearly reveals that which is, as it really is. Because I disport myself there, floating and immersing myself in the flood of grace that is his true nature, the afflicting anxieties caused by the deceptive mind have slipped away from me.

220 The Lord, the embodiment of true *jnana*, happily bestowed on me his true nature, destroying completely my deluded nature. When I realised that there is no movement for anything or anyone unless that motion is activated by my Lord, my consciousness attained tranquillity.

221 Although I was actually existing as that which is, I was wallowing and suffering in the world delusion, imagining myself to be the rising ego. When, through his love, he revealed in my heart that his real nature itself was also my

own real nature, I thrived, abiding as his real nature, free of the rising 'I'.

222 That which should be meditated upon is only the real nature of the Lord. That which should be performed is only devotion to being. That which should be attained as a blessing is only true *jnana*. That which should be savoured as benign ambrosia is only the enjoyment of perfect tranquillity.



Muruganar sitting in his room at Ramanasramam

Mauna

Of all the terms that are used to characterise the experience of the Self the one that Bhagavan seemed to prefer and use the most was *mauna*, which means silence. It is not an auditory silence or even a quietness of the mind, it is a state of profound and inexpressible stillness in which the Self is known and experienced to be one's true and abiding state.

Since the *jnani*, the liberated being, abides in the state of *mauna*, those who associate with him either physically or mentally can partake of that state of *mauna*. To the extent that one can still one's own mind in the presence of this *mauna*, to that extent the *mauna* can be experienced. This is why Bhagavan always maintained that *mauna* was the most direct and unmediated expression of his teachings.

The state of *mauna*

223 The totally motionless state of *mauna* is alone a life devoid of the blameworthy ego. That life of the bliss of *Sivam*, shining as the attachment-free *chit-para*, is beyond the reach of the ignorant who have become fragmented on account of their ego-minds.

224 Only the divine state of *mauna* is the state of *jnana*, one's real nature that shines without an [individual] 'I' as the totally perfect state. All the other states are the imagination of a mind in which the supreme *swarupa*-perspective has fragmented.

225 Only the consciousness that does not engage in any thought is the powerful and triumphant lamp of *mauna*.

226 *Mauna* is the reality, the culmination of *jnana*. It terminates the imagined difference between Vedanta and Siddhanta.[29]

227 The *mauna* that shines in the heart, destroying utterly the objective awareness of the fragmented mind, is totally and perfectly ripe *jnana*. For the *jiva*, liberation is coalescing with its unsurpassed Self-nature that shines clearly as the supreme expanse that spreads everywhere.

228 The utterly perfect supreme reality whose nature is *mauna* can only be kissed with *mauna* consciousness. It is completely impossible to reach it through the efforts of the fragmented ego-consciousness that rises as 'I'.

Teaching through *mauna*

229 When thought-free *mauna* occurs, he is the Lord who abides, embracing me in a union with him. But if, when I experience the rising of the ego, I begin to think of him, he will abandon me, appearing then to be an alien 'I' who exists apart from me.

230 When our Lord speechlessly conveys his instructions, they flow like a motionless spring [into the hearts of devotees]. When those who resort to his presence open their mouths and utter a few words, their speech is tantamount to blocking the spring with a stone.

231 The language of *mauna* is the extremely pure, divine language that is unsurpassed as the rare import of the Vedanta which proclaims it vociferously in many, many words. If, by careful investigation, one learns it, it will be discovered to be not

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[29] When contrasted with Vedanta, the term Siddhanta usually denotes the philosophical system of Saiva Siddhanta.

some new language, unknown by anyone, but the ancient language that continuously wells up in a [totally calm] intellect.

232 Through his totally unattached true *jnana* that unites everything into one, our Lord has conquered [everything] by himself shining as all those things. Very few are those who know the import of the extremely subtle instruction of *mauna* that he speaks clearly, continuously and abundantly.

233 It may be useful to engage in conversation in the presence of those who have attained great debating skills by virtue of mastering all the topics that others are ignorant of. However, in the presence of the irreproachable Lord Ramana, the speech of silence is the only speech that secures for oneself the supreme benefit.

234 Except through *mauna* there is no other means to know faultlessly the whole and primal entity that is the supreme *Brahman*. Because of its extremely subtle nature, the ultimate truth whose essence is pure consciousness cannot be known by the dualistic intellect that has not been freed from the ego-delusion. This is the conclusion of *jnanis*.

Mauna-grace

235 If one prospers as the Self, one's life blossoms into the expanse of grace, supreme bliss. The bright beauty of *mauna*, the experience of *jnana*, will itself manifest and shine in one's countenance, becoming grace-bestowing instruction.

236 Association with grace, the *mauna* that takes the form of That, surges forth naturally. Like a sun that is ever-shining in full splendour, without experiencing faltering interruptions, continuous worship spontaneously takes place in the heart through this association.

237 By becoming a prey to grace-supreme I attained *mauna* in

the heart, the abode of supreme bliss that is consciousness itself. By taking birth in the heart I now exist experiencing the supreme as my own nature. I have no attachment that brings about desires.

238 I resorted to my generous Lord who grants his *mauna*-grace like a flood. I do not know how and where my deceitful mind vanished in that flood, but now my heart flourishes as the supreme expanse, free from thought. For me, reality is not just clear and obvious, like a cup in my hand. It is now my own nature.

239 The state of *mauna* thrives as the experience of the grace-firmament, that expanse of supreme bliss which is the perfect primal entity. Consequently, all the other states came to merge in it like many different rivers entering the ocean of *mauna*.

My Lord put me in *mauna*

240 Seeing the acute suffering of this wretch, Siva-Ramana, worshipped and glorified by the noble ones, took pity on me and imprinted his feet of grace on the rock-like mind of this fallen one. *Mauna* consciousness sprang forth.

241 I approached the Lord of divine grace, that perfected supreme being, with a powerful upsurge of devotional enthusiasm. He subdued the impetuosity of devotional fervour in such a way that the experience of *mauna* flourished in my heart.

242 He who abides as That in perpetual *mauna* revealed to me that *mauna* itself is the culmination of *jnana* in the great experience within which one shines merely as consciousness, as wholly Self, having been freed from the mental mischief that thinks 'I' and 'mine'.

243 I have been blessed in the heart with the arising and shining

of *mauna*-consciousness, the light of the feet of my Guru Lord who is the very form of *jnana*. Because of this, in the permanent sea of *Sivam* that is the expanse of consciousness, all the worlds became impermanent froth, and the difference between them and *Sivam* completely vanished.

244 Existing as a ladder, he raised me up in order that I could know and possess *kaivalya* [oneness], the state of grace that exists as his vast property. This estate of oneness is the state of grace, the experience of *mauna*. The vision of it, which now remains as my sole and complete enjoyment, is possible only for those who have received the grace of the Lord, and not for others.

245 My Lord is the doctor of true *jnana*, the one who liberally bestows the grace that is *mauna*. Through him my madness, the flurry and excitement of the mind, was cured. As a result, I secured an attachment-free life in *swarupa*, consciousness-the-supreme, that which shines as the medicine of truth for the madness.

246 Ensuring that I did not wander and suffer by visiting holy places one after another, my Lord revealed to me the nature of the expanse of *mauna*, the immense and lofty holy place of pure grace. Having attained deathless life there, I now live in that glorious place, a place which is the roseate feet of the true God's nature that darkness cannot approach.

247 The state of divine silence, the knowledge of *Sivam* that plunges the mind into the flood of bliss, was itself, for this forlorn one, the state of liberation. Now that the rising within of the ego 'I' has completely ceased, what is also absent are the false mental movements induced by the illusory world that rises along with the ego.

248 I, his slave, realised clearly that I do not at any time have any existence except within my Lord's feet of grace, the non-

dual transcendent light of being-consciousness. My soul attained the state of *mauna*, free of the delusion of 'I' that experiences desire and the resultant delusion of 'mine'.

249 Having been blessed with the rising and shining of true knowledge in the form of *mauna* itself, what could I possibly need other kinds of knowledge for? In pure being, the eternal *Sivam* that flourishes as the non-dual abode, there is neither the false 'I' nor the attention to objects that grows out of it.

250 When the unique light of *mauna*, the light of non-dual *swarupa*-consciousness, advanced vigorously, shining its light, all the other lights were extinguished, becoming darkness. The chicanery of concepts enacted by the fragmented mind dimmed, becoming an illusion, and my supreme truth, absolute being, shone forth wonderfully for me.

251 My Lord, who is a master of the direct experience of one's real nature to which grace is the sole means of access, challenged me: 'If there is ignorance, then show it to me, because in the heart there is nothing but the silent consciousness that is reality.'

Through the experience attained by virtue of his grace, ignorance, the source of delusion, was not to be found in the heart. Having no answer for my Lord, he who is full of real knowledge, my mind attained the fullness of silence and remained still.

252 'Though the Self appears to exist as everything, in reality it is none of those things.' As this truth shone in my heart, abidance in divine silence, free of the delusion of the ignorant mind, came to be perfectly attained as my own nature.

The Name and Form of my Lord

The form of my Lord

253 Why does Siva Ramana, who wears honey-bearing *kondrai* blossoms,[30] move about here, displaying a comely bodily form? He is moving about here as a human being with the excellent purpose of catching wild deer by showing a tamed one [as a decoy].[31]

254 In the past I did not know that which is termed as supreme *Brahman*. Now that I have seen and known it, I experience joy. It moves about in the form of a mendicant, supporting itself on a walking stick, looking around for souls to save with the gaze of his lotus eyes.

255 Manifesting as a true brahmin[32] in order to redeem me, Lord Siva assumed a form for my sake and then bestowed on me firm *mauna*, pure being, the state of divine and supreme tranquillity.

256 In order to destroy completely the affliction of our births and deaths the Lord who has neither birth nor death appeared

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30 *Kondrai* (Indian laburnum) flowers are traditionally associated with Siva.

31 Bhagavan taught that the formless Self needs to take the physical form of a Guru to catch the attention of devotees who are not capable of being aware of the Guru as the Self within.

32 'Brahmin,' here and in many other places in this work, denotes a knower of *Brahman*, not a member of a particular caste.

to us, his devotees, in the form of someone who had taken birth. In his presence our births ceased, having been seen to be a mere deception, a conjuring trick.

257 Without [really] taking birth, the reality that exists unceasingly at all times and in all places was born through grace in Tiruchuzhi. Through its birth many died without dying.

258 Noble disciples will realise clearly that the form of the Guru is indeed the auspicious form of the divine that bestows the *jnana*-revelation. Is it not the form of the Guru that granted to me here the experience of the Self, knowledge of my real nature, saying, 'Here! Take it!'?

259 The form of the mind that thinks of 'other' forms was destroyed through the consciousness that puts its faith solely in the one unique form which manifested in the shape of the Guru and ruled over me, cleansing me of my defilements. I grew and ended up as the vast expanse, full of the great light of blissful grace.

260 When my own form was plundered by the Guru's real form, I came to be endowed with the light of true *jnana*, the divine feet. The formless, great supreme *swarupa*, whose nature is attachment-free grace, seized and possessed me, becoming my very own existence.

261 The extreme physical beauty of the Master who reigned over me would enamour even those *munis* [sages] who have earnestly taken up spiritual practice, up to the point they become one with him through the experience of the one, non-dual Self that arises following the destruction of the 'I am the body' conviction.

262 My Lord's excellent real form is a spectacle seen through grace. There, on the beautiful stage of *mauna*, the handsome

dancer who performs the dance, the dance itself, and the perceiver who witnesses it with delight, all merge into one.

The face of my Lord

263 Behold the countenance of the repository of compassion who lives in Ramanasramam at [the foot of] Arunachala! Through his divine grace the impetuosity of *sankalpas* [thoughts and desires] will be quelled so completely that sorrow will subside and bliss will be attained.

264 On the countenance of my Guru-Lord, the embodiment of unalloyed bliss of silence, there dances brightly the gaze of grace that grants tranquil Siva-*jnana*. His face, like a magnet, attracts towards itself true devotees and bestows in their hearts the immense kingdom of *swarupa*.

265 On encountering the radiance of the *mauna*-sporting countenance of Guru Ramana, who destroys the 'I am the body' delusion, human beings will rejoice, becoming wholly free of the afflicting agitation of mind. Even celestial beings will be captivated and remain spellbound by it.

266 The Lord, *swarupa*, shines as 'I' within my heart, enabling me to live joyfully by experiencing the supreme here on this earth itself. Through the gentle smile that blossomed on his countenance, I drank the honey of magnificent bliss and was freed from weariness.

The eyes of my Lord

267 Through his beautiful eyes my Lord merged me with the state of grace, rescuing me from the sea of delusion into which I had repeatedly fallen, drowned and become lost. Through him I saw that my real nature is the being-consciousness, free of divisions, the extremely pure expanse whose essence is supreme tranquillity.

268 He is the ancient one; he is the recent one; he exists as the supreme of supremes; he is the master who exercised dominion over this servant. Through his eyes he showered the rain of silent instruction that cooled my heart. As a result he himself became my 'I'.

269 Through the grace of the one who transformed me wholly into consciousness with his beautiful grace-bestowing eyes, this is what I saw as the authentic and supreme *tapas*: consciousness shining with extreme purity through the great quality of remaining totally bereft of a connection with anything else.

270 I said, 'Beautiful-eyed one, won't you bestow your grace on me?' He, the supernal light of being-consciousness, the immanent 'eye', glanced at me in such a way that what flourished for me here was the vision in which his eyes and my eyes shone as not different from each other.

271 When my Master, who fosters with care true devotees who are fearful, gazed at me with his grace-filled eyes, without rejecting me as a deceitful person, the treacherous lotus bud of the mind was released from its constricting bond and blossomed into the immaculate space, saturated with *jnana*.

The name of my Lord

272 The medicine that dispels the disease of mental anxiety is the name of my Lord Ramana who, to my delight, adopted me.

273 The divine name of the Guru is the great epoch-ending fire[33] which dries up so completely the sea that is the delusion of birth, even the name 'birth' no longer exists. It is a name that

[33] The 'epoch-ending fire' is a translation of *vadava*, the intense underwater fire that, according to some versions of Hindu cosmology, destroys everything at the end of each *yuga*.

liberally bestows grace, true *jnana*, and completely eradicates forgetfulness of the Self. Why would I need scriptures when I am clearly convinced of its efficacy?

274 If I should speak the name of the *mahatma* [great being] who constrained my mouth to silence and suppressed my deeply deluded demon mind, it is the lordly Ramana, who bade me uproot my rapidly burgeoning thoughts as soon as they arose, while they were young and weak.

275 You who, delighting in a life that is circumscribed by living within the body, suffer through anxieties that break up your heart! The auspicious name '*Namo Ramanaya*' [obeisance to Lord Ramana] is the most suitable for remembrance because of its sweet taste. For the mind, it is like consuming honey. Even while living on this earth, [through remembering this name] I came to possess the greatness of living my life in the supreme abode, the expanse of *Sivam* in which flourishes peace. You too should attain that eminent state.

276 Like a fire that ignites cotton, the auspicious name '*Namo Ramanaya*' acts in the heart on the deadly sin that arises from falling into the abyssal state in which the soul is driven to become a slave of the five senses. It flourishes as the excellent and eternal asylum for those who have taken refuge in [the Lord,] having reached him through divine service. It is the antidote for the ruinous poison of forgetting the Self. For us it is rare ambrosia.

277 The *jnana*-bestowing Guru brought me under his rule through the light of *mauna* that radiated from his face. May devotees live joyfully, regarding the Guru's divine name itself as the refreshing ambrosial food they have encountered on account of their past merit.

Jnana

The Sanskrit word *jnana*, meaning 'knowledge', is generally reserved in Bhagavan's teachings and the writings of Muruganar for a directly experienced knowledge of the Self. It is not something known by the individual self. It is, instead, the state that remains when the individual knower has been eradicated. If knowledge is acquired by a knower through thoughts and perceptions, the word used for that knowledge is more likely to be *vidya*. When the individual self is definitively extinguished in the Self, *vidya* and its opposite *avidya* [ignorance] vanish, leaving only *jnana*.

Jnana, Self-knowledge

278 The shining of *jnana* is merely the loss of the binding attachment of 'I' to the body, which is not 'I'. Nothing else. You should know that the perfect cessation of the ego is the truth of shining harmoniously as all the divine virtues.

279 The quality of peace, free of anger, will abound in a mind wherein shines the light of the lamp of true *jnana*.

280 The fire of *jnana*, the *Atma-swarupa*, will not allow anything other than itself to rear its head.

281 Only the *vidya* [knowledge] that enables one to exist as *swarupa* is true *vidya*. The other *vidyas*, all of which are *mithya* [unreal], merely develop and expand unreality. Bondage is only the intellect, the babbling ego-delusion that wants to master these [unreal] *vidyas*. *Swarupa*, which is free of this bondage, is just thought-free divine silence.

My Lord granted me true knowledge

282 My Lord Ramana, the treasure of perennial *tapas*, gave me the treasure of true *jnana*, which is superior to all the nine treasures [of Kubera, the god of wealth]. I now live in this world freed from the indigence that was my delusion, taking refuge in the feet of he who is the rich treasure of compassion and charity.

283 If the ruinous impure consciousness, the 'I am the body' idea, did not exist, no other defect would arise in the heart. Therefore he granted me true *jnana* [the ego-free state], that unique and superb virtue, making all the defects that had accrued as imperfections depart.

284 Though I was stupid, a slave who had degraded himself through inferior conduct, he transformed me into a person who possessed the virtue of true *jnana*. By joining him – he who is like the golden Mount Meru[34] that possesses the quality of *mauna* – my precious soul, initially dark like a crow, was transformed completely into his gold nature, the divine silence.

285 Appearing as though he has given nothing [substantial], my Lord granted the experience of *swarupa*, the oneness that shines as the perfect primal entity. In that triumph of grace which is the true *jnana* that eternally exists and shines as a unitary whole, all the various types of differences vanished.

286 In pursuit of Self-knowledge I resorted to the Lord who possesses the wealth of true *jnana*. Having helped me with the uniquely appropriate science to attain the knowledge that falsified all other sciences and made them cease as

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[34] Mount Meru is a mythical mountain. One of its properties is that it has the capacity to turn everything that alights on it into gold.

ignorance, that [knowledge] now shines in my heart as the non-dual reality.

287 When I said, 'You are the means for me to cross the ocean of *samsara*,' you infused my heart with the experience of non-dual *jnana*. Who is as wonderful as you, you who cleanse impurities and grant limitless life to insignificant people such as myself?

Attaining true knowledge through *tapas*

288 Only *sadhana* undertaken to gain knowledge of reality is true *tapas*. Nothing else is.

289 One's very nature becomes *tapas* if one gains the reality that is knowledge of oneself and abides as that.

290 The answer to the question 'What is the hallmark of *tapas*?' is 'To be freed, through knowledge of reality, from the infatuation with illusory appearances'.

The *jnani*

It is conventional to refer to someone who has attained *jnana* as a *jnani*. This is a traditional designation that divides people into those who know the Self and those (*ajnanis*) who do not. However, this is an extension of the wrong idea that the Self is something that is known by a knower: some will be aware of it and some will not. Bhagavan pointed out that there are no individuals who know or who are ignorant of their true nature. *Jnana* alone exists. Despite this, for the benefit of those who want to know what *jnana* might be like, it is often described as if it is an experience of a knower of the Self.

291 Reality, *swarupa*, shines non-dually with nothing separate from it. Therefore, for the firm *jnanis*, who have realised the truth, completely unattached divine silence will arise and shine clearly in the heart, the mischievous movements of the fragmentary mind having come to an end.

292 True *jnanis* in whom the ego has completely died rejoice in the distress-free supreme bliss, despite having no possessions. Though worldly people have seen this, they remain bewildered, as they continue to wallow in the 'I am the body' ignorance. Their attitude of mind which makes them feel that they need something to be happy deserves nothing but pity.

293 The great *tapasvins* [those who perform great *tapas*] remain alone, having abandoned the associations that arise through delusion. The activity cherished by their pure minds is to remain ego-free in a state of delightful union with that supreme reality which dwells alone.

294 Since the *jnani's* mind rejoices in *Sivam*, the transcendental *turiya*, he will not experience mental distress by getting caught in the other three states, which are merely appearances in it. Because he abides continuously in the heart in the state of perfect well-being as a result of the felicitous experience of his real nature, he never has a single desire.

295 Even if the heavens shake and stir, those who have known the truth will merely watch it without experiencing distress.

296 The mere life on this earth of those whose minds have become clarified as *Sivam* deserves to be regarded as *tapas*.

297 In the presence of the Self the world stirs, but the Self does not. He who has known his truth, the Self, is indeed *Sadasivam*. Though he appears from the perspective of others to be an embodied individual, bound by karma, he is actually *swarupa*, the transcendental *turiya*.

298 For those who possess a heart that has attained the unique and worthy *mauna*, how will it matter which [bodily or mental] instrument performs what activity?

299 In the experience of *jnanis* the body, the abode for enjoyments, is not made up of the five elements – it is just space.

300 The unreal ego arises in the deluded perspective. It is the cruel, binding shackle that experiences veiling. Because the *jnani's* mind is devoid of the rising ego, it shines with the nature of *swarupa*, the transcendental experience. Its shining will eclipse the imaginary appearance, the world that is perceived in the darkness of ignorance.

301 Because the *jnani* is free from the 'I am the body' ego he transcends the world and is therefore its supreme Lord. As for everyone else, since they are bound by the ego, they are wholly embroiled in the world and consequently are only slaves to it.

302 The mental frame of mind that exhibits itself by saying, 'Good, good,' to everything, which hates nothing and does not say, 'Not good, not good,' is a virtue that is eternally present in *jnanis* and is the cause of them not suffering under any circumstances.

303 Because the ego, the hostile and assertive rising of the 'I', has completely died for *jnanis*, the difference-generating thoughts that fill one with delusion have completely ceased [in them]. In their hearts the rapture of silence, the experience of *jnana*, will arise and shine continuously as the undivided *swarupa*.

304 Since that state of supreme bliss which is one's own nature and which shines clearly in *nirvikalpa samadhi* [35] is thought-free, it will disappear and cease if thought arises. Those excellent *jnanis* who are firm in being-consciousness will

[35] An introverted but temporary thought-free state of Self-awareness.

abide and shine as pure *Sivam* because their thinking mind has died completely.

305 If even getting a chance to have *darshan* of *jnanis* is a blessing, then what to say about the shining benefit that accrues to those who have obtained the privilege of serving them devoutly in many ways, taking them as their guide and support.

The majestic begging *jnani*

In Bhagavan's early years in Tiruvannamalai he sometimes fed himself by begging for his food. In later years, when he spoke about this, he emphasised that it was not a demeaning activity. On the contrary, he said, he did it in a state of great exultation:

> He [Bhagavan] said: 'You cannot conceive of the majesty and dignity I felt while so begging. The first day, when I begged from Gurukal's wife, I felt bashful about it as a result of habits of upbringing, but after that there was absolutely no feeling of abasement. I felt like a king and more than a king. I have sometimes received stale gruel at some house and taken it without salt or any other flavouring, in the open street, before great pandits and other important men who used to come and prostrate themselves before me. I then wiped my hands on my head and passed on supremely happy and in a state of mind in which even emperors were mere straw in my sight. You can't imagine it. It is because there is such a path that we find tales in history of kings giving up their thrones and taking to this path.'[36]

Muruganar had a similar attitude:

306 The ultimate *tapas* is living on begged food and doing it without the false pride 'I [am doing this]'. Those who have accomplished this should not be disregarded as degraded

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[36] *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, 30th May 1946.

and undignified people. Their majesty, thriving through a dispassion that is rooted in *jnana*, is unattainable even for Indra, the chief of the *devas*.

307 Through *jnana*, the authentic grace that terminates ignorance, I have been blessed with the great fortune of eating food obtained by begging in a way that elevates [rather than demeans]. And through the infinite *Sivam* nature that surges as inexhaustible wealth both likes and dislikes became totally false.

308 My Lord who possesses the power of bestowing *jnana*, which shines abundantly in him, desired true knowledge to arise for me. As a result, what I attained inside was becoming the supreme ruler of the empire of the Self. The great life I attained outside was living on begged food.

309 For a *sadhu*, the great life of accepting and eating food as alms is the fearless and majestic life of grace. It is a life free of reproach in which he exists as supreme bliss in the transcendental expanse, the state of peace devoid of the leaping of the insignificant mind.

Muruganar eating in his Ramanasramam room.

The Thought of my Lord

Thinking of my Lord

310 I do not derive pleasure from gold, precious gems or sense objects. By virtue of Siva-*jnana*, the grace that sees nothing alien to your roseate feet, I [take pleasure only in] thinking of you, realising you and delighting in you, my Lord, who joyfully ruled over me.

311 I was freed from the mind, that illusory and treacherous delusion, by thinking exclusively of the liberal bestower of perfect true *jnana*. While dwelling on him, the grace of that generous Lord totally transformed my inner life, ensuring that the veiling mind was shed completely.

312 The tranquillity that is the supreme ambrosia of grace is difficult to embrace. If you want to taste this ambrosia, you should melt within your heart by constantly thinking of the Lord. Do it in such a way that the heart and soul repeatedly approach *Sivaṃ*, wearing themselves down more and more, becoming progressively more subtle until they finally become one with it.

313 Why seek a *tapas* other than true love, the melting of the mind that comes from meditating on my Lord?

314 No other *tapas* is required for those whose minds have dissolved by meditating on the Lord.

315 Melting within by repeatedly thinking of him in a loving way became the cord with which my Lord tied me to himself. His ultimate real nature, existing as the unique pure being, surged forth as pure consciousness, absolutely blemishless grace.

316 Though appearing initially to establish yourself in my own heart, you actually held and subdued me within yourself. By thinking of you I obtained from you the reward of becoming still by witnessing the total destruction of the 'I'.

317 The Lord of Annamalai, who protects with his grace those who abide dwelling on him, without thoughts made my mind, which was like a drunk frenzied monkey, lie in repose like a dead snake that remains motionless.

Attaining *mauna* through the thought of the Lord

318 By thinking of my Lord, thought waves came to a complete rest. I was freed from attachment to actions I performed. I separated from potential associations that approached me. I merged everywhere with *mauna*, the virtuous conduct of abiding as being.

319 Because thinking of my Lord yielded bliss for me, I realised that my Lord is the very form of bliss. By experiencing my Lord through the *mauna*-consciousness in my heart, I too became, with delight, that [bliss].

320 Those who want to rejoice in the flood of the experience of *mauna*, consciousness-the-supreme, extremely clear grace, should constantly and longingly think of the Lord in the heart. The false deceitful mind that says 'I' should, as a result of this practice, dissolve completely [in the Lord] and die.

321 Because the thought of our Lord destroys completely all other thoughts, devotees will come to experience the grace

that is supreme tranquillity through that thought of our Lord. The potency of the supreme power of our Lord's *mauna* will destroy the ego of true devotees, bestowing on them the experience of our Lord's very own real nature, the Self, *jnana*.

322 My Lord bestowed his grace by completely destroying my mind, the ego consciousness, in such a way that it was impossible for me to remember or forget. Now, by thinking without thought of him as he really is, in an authentic way, I experience the shining of *mauna*, devoid of the sense of doership.

The Guru

The Guru

323 Only the Self, the real Lord who exists and shines in the heart as 'I, I', is the Guru.

324 The appropriate Guru for you is the one whom you feel your mind has been effortlessly and totally captivated by. He is indeed the *jnana* Guru who bestows being-consciousness and who shines as the form of God himself in this world.

325 Only when the devotee is fully mature does Lord Parameswara, through his grace, bestow true *jnana* in abundance. The Guru, on the other hand, brings the devotee's mind to complete maturity through his power, and then bestows true *jnana* by charging it with *sakti-pada*.[37]

326 Only those Gurus who, like the sun, radiate penetrating rays of grace are *jnana* Gurus. Lord Siva manifested as Guru Ramana. He is consciousness-the-supreme, who with his glance puts an end to the delusion of fear-inducing concepts.

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[37] Lord Parameswara is Lord Siva. *Sakti-pada* is both the power and the process by which the Guru liberates the devotee. Muruganar is saying here that God (Lord Parameswara) has the capacity to do this only if the devotee is in a mature state, whereas the Guru has the additional power and capacity to bring devotees to that state of maturity. The title Muruganar gave this verse was 'The Superiority of Guru over God'.

327 Lord Arunachaleswara, who stands as the grace-bestowing supreme, assumed the form of the *Brahman*-knowing Guru. His only wish is to transform the life of devotees into a life of nothing but bliss that possesses the surging light of *jnana* devoid of ignorance.

328 The *jiva* has taken on the form of the body, forgetting its real nature, the Self, which is the light of consciousness, the limitless sky-like expanse. The pre-eminent function of the *Sadguru* who is the Self, one's true nature, is to clearly convince the *jiva* of its real nature by dispelling the delusion of 'I' and 'mine' in the body, the possessions, and so on.

329 The peerless light of true *jnana* will well up and surge forth in a heart that has taken as its exclusive target the grace of the Guru. In the Self-experience in which nothing but consciousness exists, the fear-inducing mental anxieties that cause distress will leave for good, and the bliss associated with an intense serenity of mind will arise, filling up the heart.

330 The trustworthy Guru Ramana, the fire of *jnana*, possesses a perfect and ripe wisdom that is full of the light of *mauna*. He steals as his tribute only the ego-mind, the delusion, which is the 'I am this body of flesh' stain.

331 Other than the grace-bestowing Guru, who is both father and mother, who else on this earth exists as the close and permanent relative who is capable of bestowing the eminent being-consciousness that confers true benefit on the *jiva*, not only in this birth, but in all births?

My Guru

332 I remained befuddled, imagining I had compulsory duties to perform. My Guru then freed me completely from this sense of obligation through the experience of firm *jnana*, the

state of oneness that is free from the bewilderment of the ego which brings into being the idea of mandatory duties. He transformed me into the supreme which, by its very nature, soars as the empyrean of grace.

333 My Guru who lives forever, abiding gloriously in the heart as consciousness, devoid of overpowering sleep, gently smiled within himself, thinking of my foolish ignorance that makes me sing the waking up song for him.[38]

334 My Guru shines as the embodiment of *mauna*, the infinite expanse of grace. To make me see myself as himself in the time it takes to blink an eye, he demonstrated clearly in my heart, in the form of the pure expanse, the *jnana swarupa* that exists as the treasure trove of grace.

335 My Guru who possesses the virtue of generosity effectively exercised his dominion over me by bestowing on me the blessed state of living in perpetual bliss. I now live as an inebriated, lazy man, my mind swelling with bliss, just like a bee that has drunk the honey of grace at his feet. I merely eat and play, with absolutely no anxieties in my heart.

336 How wonderful it is that the very mind which was accustomed to moving in the way of bondage has now been made to shine with liberation as its own nature! What other evidence is needed that Ramana, the king of Gurus, is a magician?

337 Guru Ramana, the Lord, wells up and surges as rapturous supreme bliss in the hearts of those true devotees in whom

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[38] There is a song in *Tiruvachakam* entitled 'Tirupalliezhucchi' that is generally sung to wake Siva up in the early morning. Muruganar made his own version of this song and included it in *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*. As Muruganar points out in this verse, since Bhagavan is never in the unconscious state of deep sleep, there is no need to attempt to wake him up.

love abounds. He, the supreme reality who sustains this world as its unmoving prop, will not allow those who have placed their trust in him to suffer and wither away.

338 At first he appeared separate from me as my mother and father, as the God who bestows grace, and eventually as the utterly impartial teacher of true *jnana*. Enabling me to experience bliss, he has now become one with me as my own non-dual Self-nature, that which alone is entitled to one's love, which confers only goodness.

339 My God Ramana reigned over me, shining clearly within me as the Self, the formless truth of consciousness, and externally as the Guru who bestows grace-consciousness. As I am firmly established in his feet, there is no delusion for me.

340 He is the brahmin [*Brahman*-knower], the embodiment of immaculate grace that is the intrinsic nature of the transcendental *swarupa*. As a consequence of him abiding in my heart without ever leaving it, the sense of 'I' and 'mine' that are the ego-delusion, has been destroyed. In his state of being the Guru, none can equal or better him.

341 It is not possible for me to describe even slightly the greatness of the Guru who totally destroyed my mental bewilderment. If I attempt to have thoughts, my mind will ecstatically glorify his nature in the abode of *mauna*, that which is the source of the thought that attempted to praise him.

342 Because *Sivam*, ever untouched by name and form, itself took me as its target by becoming the form of the Guru, I have flourishing in my heart a life of resting in the divine feet of silence, that state of distinction in which there is nothing to dwell upon.

My Guru-Lord

343 Except for the god who is my Guru Lord, the master of *mauna*, what did all the other gods do for me? All the other gods in their heavens exist only for everyone else. For me, my Guru alone is my god.

344 Our Lord, shining forth resplendently as *swarupa*, exists as the repository of grace. When he is waiting for an opportune moment to steal your ego and save you from misery-filled and delusive *samsara*, do not go after and join those spurious gurus who wander in the streets with the sole aim of stealing your wealth.

345 To destroy the false first person that rises as 'I', our Lord incarnated himself in an appropriate way upon this earth as the *jnana* Guru to promulgate the enquiry method, 'Who am I?' The way to attain his divine feet of silence that are the state of liberation is to come to him and remain fully under the dominion of our Lord who is the supreme light of grace, *jnana*.

346 Remaining as the sun of *jnana*, my Lord, the *Sadguru*, radiated the light of grace and dispelled completely the dense darkness, the intense delusion in my heart. Consequently, the distress arising through bewilderment, which in turn is caused by the obsession with concepts, ended. This is how my Lord came to exercise his rule over me, I who was such an insignificant one.

347 Our Guru, our Lord Ramana, *Sadasivan* who is free from the ego, is the excellent one who speaks only about *jnana*, and never utters a single useless word. He is a sea of serenity, free of anger. He is the wish-fulfilling jewel in the hearts of human beings.

348 Because the light of my Guru whose form is consciousness

now flourishes in my heart spontaneously as the Self, I see it continuously, without ever blinking. Will the light that has embraced me and enabled me to attain *mauna* through a dead ego ever allow me to blink?

349 While remaining as the expanse of consciousness that exists as the true eye, my Lord sported before me as the Guru who bestows being-consciousness, pouring down the rain of grace that became a great flood, and enabling the realisation of the one deathless reality in the heart.

350 Our peerless Lord, the Guru who has the true *jnana* that is divine grace, is a prosperous person who grants to those who resort to him the ultimate refuge, the state of *Sivam* itself, making it become their possession. But those whose minds are deluded by desire, and so on,[39] will go to him and beg only for garbage, dry leaves and twigs.

351 Ramana is the embodiment of reality in whom flourishes abundantly the godly Lordship that is extolled by all the people of the world. He is the grace-bestowing Guru for the science of the supreme [*paravidya*]. His power of *jnana*, the knowledge of reality that is the state of *mauna* and which is the perfection of liberation, is extremely difficult for anyone to attain.

The Guru-jewel

352 Having had *darshan* of the Guru-jewel, from now on I will not wander and suffer in this world, desiring a different jewel. The Guru-jewel merged in my heart as a ruby and rendered unto me the supreme benefit, enabling a life of divine exultation to prosper.

353 When I come to think of it, there is absolutely no greatness

[39] This is a reference to the following list: *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *loba* (miserliness), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (pride), *mathsarya* (jealousy).

in this world for me, a dog, other than through the Guru-jewel. Ever since the Guru-jewel that is the divine light merged in my heart, my life has become imbued with the radiance of the diamond that is consciousness, my own real nature.

354 I, who have joined and moved intimately with the Guru-jewel, will not wander around and suffer, begging for another jewel. In the omnipresent fullness of grace bestowed by my Guru-jewel through his look of grace, I am not aware of even a single need.

355 The Guru, the magnificent jewel, abides in my heart as the light of consciousness, bringing to an end the ignoble obsessions of 'I' and 'mine'. He is the merciful one who has as his very nature the unchanging quality of grace, the beginningless [benevolent] disposition towards his devotees.

356 Remaining within my heart, my king, the jewel lamp that needs no kindling, expelled the ego-delusion, leaving no trace of it. I now spend my time extolling the glory of my Lord experiencing real bliss in my mind.

The one, unique word of my Guru

Sometimes the 'one, unique word' refers to *summa iru* ('Be still'), Bhagavan's often repeated order to the mind to be still. At other times it alludes to the silent emanations that came from Bhagavan that he claimed were the highest and primary form of his teachings.

357 I was subjected to mental bewilderment, imagining myself to be taking births and wallowing in *samsara*. Then he uttered the one word that made me never-born, clearly convincing me that I was being-consciousness, the supreme that merely exists and shines as the eye of grace. Through this eye I saw birth and death as mere imagination.

358 To engage in vain disputation about reality, the effulgent light that is beyond words and their interpretations, is stupidity. The wise course is to shine, abiding as the perfect primal entity, the reality, having lost the rising ego. This happens as a consequence of the one word bestowed by the Guru – the *mauna* consciousness that cannot be described in words.

I will serve no other Lord

359 I will cherish exclusively the divine being who is my Guru. Other than him I will not approach another human being. Responding to this [attitude] in an appropriate way, my Lord invested me, his slave, with the crown of *jnana*, and I attained *mauna*.

360 I have become a slave to the feet of my Guru-Lord, the granter of clear knowledge of reality, who dispelled my delusion of bondage and reigned over me. My mind and speech will think of and sing only about the glory of my Lord, the liberal bestower of divine grace. They will not, even in a state of forgetfulness, utter the names of others.

361 I do not have the power to offer to others even an iota of the immense desire that arises in my heart for my Lord. The perfect light of the grace of my Lord, the vast expanse of supreme bliss that is the fountainhead of love, has taken total possession of my desire.

362 By establishing me in his state of truth, the holy land of *mauna* whose nature is the consciousness that neither rises nor sets, my Lord terminated the chaotic activity of ego-consciousness. My mind will not revere anyone other than this *Brahman*-knower who is the embodiment of grace.

363 On account of the great wealth, the fortune of grace in my heart, I will now proclaim with divine arrogance: 'I will be a

slave only to the one who ruled over me, and not to anyone else in this world.'

364 I am not ignorant of the fact that all the gods who appear to be many are only one, but although I know this, out of all those gods my mind will only desire and flow towards Siva-Ramana.

365 Irrespective of what I may gain through other people in any of the worlds, from now on I will not consent in my mind, even slightly, to enter into the state of slavery to anyone else except my Lord.

366 Without getting sidetracked, my mind remains firmly established in the Self, the supreme of supremes, as nothing but the Self. As a result my love flows abundantly only towards the feet of my Lord that shine as supreme bliss. I will not entertain any [love] towards anything else.

367 My Guru, Siva-Ramana, dispelled the twin attachments of 'I' and 'mine', and by doing so abolished the affliction of birth, becoming my own *swarupa* that shines as the light of consciousness. Now that I have taken up personal service to my Lord's feet of grace, there is no possibility that I will ever become enslaved to another.

368 My Lord, who manifested in this world and ruled over me, established in my heart the kingdom of infinitely spacious grace, enabling me to experience *swarupa*, the divine silence whose very nature is happiness. For what purpose should I now resort to others, uttering words of flattery?

369 The excellent grace that my Lord granted me, the lowest dog, was the supreme expanse of consciousness in which I could see no separate object to desire. I will only take refuge in my Lord, my own Self, he who bestowed this lofty state on this dog. I will not run after anyone else, seeking anything else.

My Lord ruled over me

The founding fathers of the Tamil Saiva tradition – the saints such as Appar, Jnanasambandhar, Sundaramurthy and Manikkavachagar who lived over a thousand years ago – regarded Siva not only as their Guru and God, they also envisaged him to be their worldly Lord. Siva ruled over them in the same way that an absolute monarch rules over his subjects. The saints joyfully submitted to his authority in both the earthly and spiritual realms, and the Saiva movement of that era celebrated devotees who exhibited unquestioning obedience to Siva's often outrageous commands. They took it to such extremes that the ideal relationship between the devotee and Siva was often envisaged to be the one that existed between a slave and his master. The subjugation was entirely voluntary, though. Devotees abandoned their personal will to their divine Lord, and in return the Lord granted them the grace that ended their karma and allowed them to remain in a state of perpetual communion with him.

Muruganar strongly identified with this tradition and these attitudes. He saw Sri Ramana as his earthly Master and ruler, as well as his Guru, and he revelled in his role of being the utterly subservient subject and slave.

Our ruler, our Lord

370 All responsibilities are only for the Lord. Not a single one really accrues to the devotees who have come under his rule. For the beings of the world the way of life to be followed is to pay loving attention to grace. Doing this is demonstrating love towards the Lord.

371 I do not know what it was like for the Lord who reigned over us, but for the citizens who throng under his feet of grace, it is perpetual bliss. The burden arising from reigning over devotees through grace rests on the head of our Lord, the supreme one, but for us, the only 'burden' is experiencing love for him in our minds.

372 My Lord said, 'As I myself am you, you belong exclusively to me. I am the primal, perfect one who exists as everything. My nature is that *mauna* in which you do not think of yourself as an "I", alien to me.'

My Lord ruled over me

373 The feet of the merciful one ruled me by bestowing on the soul of this cur a seat in the very centre of *mauna* whose form is *jnana*. Those feet now shine as the light of being in my heart, having destroyed the *vasanas*[40] present in the ego-mind, the illusory limitation.

374 Because you ruled over me by entering my heart without a moment's delay, I recognised you as my true owner. Other than you, who revealed to me the life of grace, the life of enduring supreme bliss, I will not accept as true any other god.

375 Not only did he exercise dominion over me by revealing consciousness to be my real nature, he also bestowed on me the state in which I never leave that fullness. I dived deeply and died, ending up as the reality, consciousness, freed from the feeling of joining and separating.

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[40] *Vasanas* are the latent tendencies or desires that impel one towards particular courses of action. In Sri Ramana's teachings they survive the physical dissolution of the body. At the moment of death they withdraw into the heart and then, sometime later, they bring into being another incarnation in which the desires can be enjoyed. They are, therefore, the fuel that drives the whole process of *samsara*, the endless round of births and deaths.

376 My Lord, the embodiment of *Sivam*, exercised his lordship over me by bestowing on me the attainment [*siddhi*] of liberation [*kaivalyam*], the experience of the knowledge of non-dual reality. Since his nature is non-dual, the *jiva* can only experience him as a reflection in a pure mind, and not in any other way.

377 He, the one who possesses wondrous renown, ruled over me, a frenzied person who totally lacked both *jnana* and true devotion. The *jnana* and true devotion that arose in me through the great triumph of his grace that never separates from me are not different from the *aham* [the real 'I'].

378 Formerly a simpleton who was hoodwinked by the demeaning objects of the senses, I rejoiced when I became a subject of my Lord. In my mind, where previously delusion reigned and dominated as a consequence of the impetuous ego, the rule of my Lord's grace flourished.

Becoming a slave to the Lord

379 I should take up slavery to my peerless and incomparable Lord and have as my guaranteed sustenance harmonious union with his golden feet. To live following the footsteps that marked his path – this indeed is the desire of his slave.

380 However much one may learn by oneself and however much one may learn from others, what is the point unless the ego is completely destroyed? As his slave, I will not seek from my Lord, who is the embodiment of reality that is true wisdom, anything else apart from abidance in the state of ego-free consciousness, as consciousness.

381 'Realise that "you" do not belong to you. As "I" you belong only to me.' Thus decreed the Lord who arose as the destroyer of my karma. Through the might of his grace the ego that said 'I' was destroyed, enabling me to become one with his true nature.

382 If I am going to come exclusively under the sway of Ramana, he who exercised Lordship over me in this life, then let any number of births arise for me on this earth. Through the joy of devotion to the feet of the Guru who became my Lord I will [still] shine, conquering everything, without being afraid of those [births].

383 I have become totally and exclusively a slave to my Lord, he who brought me under his command by transforming me into the form of bliss. Why do I need anyone else as a refuge? Right up to the time of death I will be at his service, and in that final moment I will obtain the deathless state of *Sivam* in my Lord himself.

384 Everyone and everything are truly the forms of my Lord, to whom I have become a slave. Therefore, in my mind, I conduct myself as a slave by having undiminishing love for all the beings of this vast world.

385 I said, 'I am your slave forever'. He retorted, 'I exist as the perfect whole. Who are you to think you are a second person, apart from me?' The upwelling that rose as 'I', as if distinct from him, merged in the heart and the feeling of duality ceased.

386 Through the intimate and harmonious way in which you reigned over me, I attained you as my owner in my heart. Now, except for the blessing of your endless natural state, there is no other desire remaining for your slave.

387 I do not belong even to myself but only to my king who reigned over me by destroying the sorrow that was my mind. For one such as I, I who have become completely and utterly his bondslave, any association with others will be highly improper conduct.

388 I am a slave to none else save my Lord who destroyed my

mind, enabling me to become glorious as the solitary *Sivam*. Because I do not possess the insignificant ego, I do not suffer from poverty. Through my Lord's grace I live prosperously as one who possesses the wealth of grace in abundance.

389 Because I became a slave to my Lord, the very embodiment of supreme Siva, I lost the individual freedom which is the ego-mind that impels the rising of 'I'. As a consequence, I shone having a life of distinction in the supreme *swarupa*, a life in which I move in harmony with whatever way his grace, the supreme power, actuates me.

390 My rare and peerless Lord made me his slave through his extreme ease of access and affability, thereby causing the consciousness that is aware of oneness to spring forth in my heart. The false delusion vanished, terminating the bewilderment of mind that arises through duality. I experienced, in the feet of the Lord's grace that is the state of pure consciousness, true devotion, wholly in the form of itself.

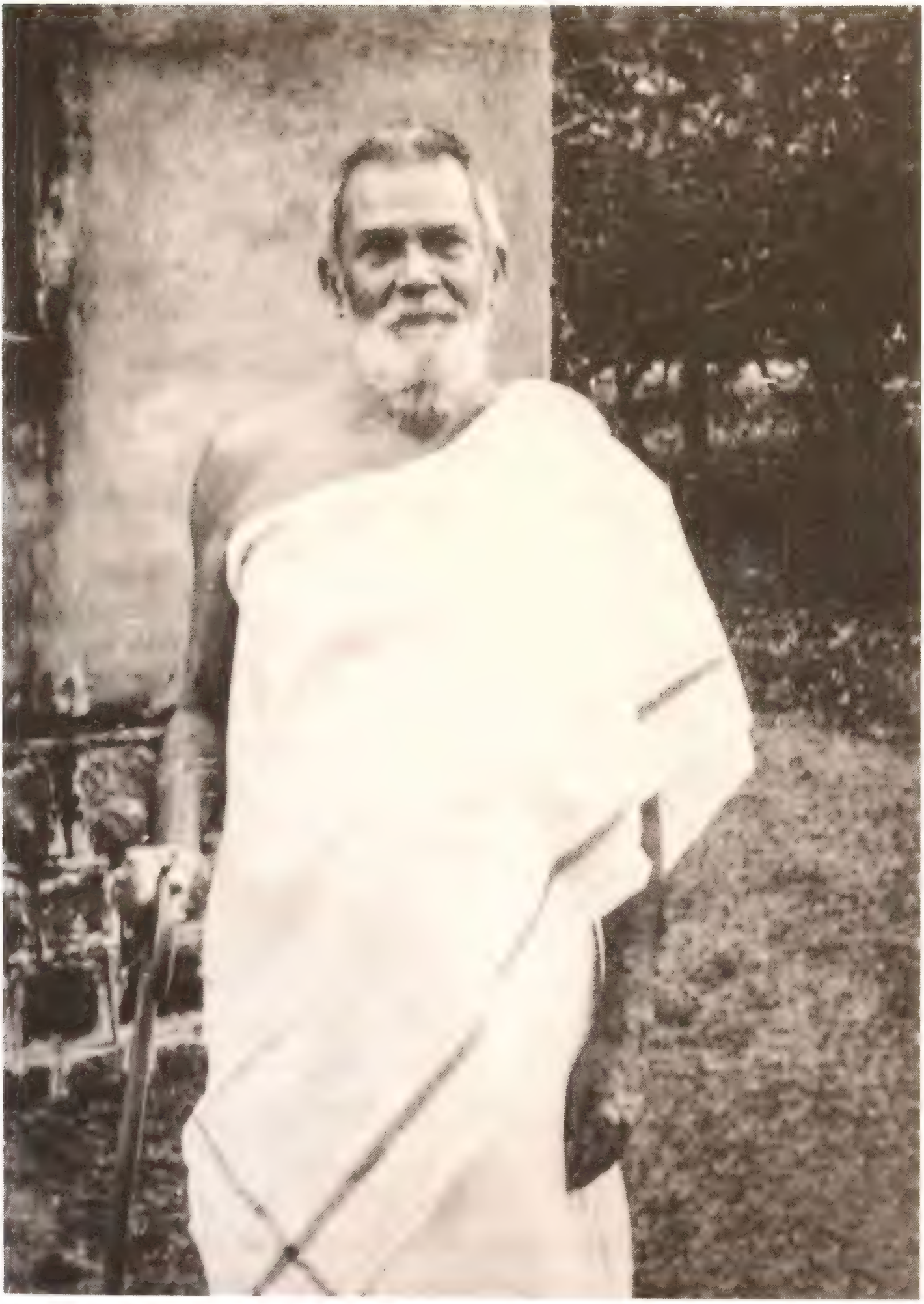
391 Forms and their attributes bring into existence the ideas of master and slave, Siva and *jiva*, but these only exist in the deluded view of the *jiva*, which is just the mind with which one associates. Since they do not have any power to function in the shining being-consciousness, reality, they are not one's disease-free real nature.

392 The power of my Lord's grace bears this slave's entire burden, which has been consigned to his feet of grace. As a result my consciousness remains motionless, totally united with those feet.

393 What I have in my heart as my possession is only the grace of my possessor. I have no other possessions in this world. Beneath his feet I, his slave, was blessed with the kingship of the kingdom of supreme bliss, *swarupa*, a kingdom far superior to those of kings.

My Lord ruled over me

394 I am my own Lord; I am my own slave. Such is the indescribable experience of the one Self.



Muruganar, probably in the late 1950s or early 60s.

Grace

The grace of my Guru

395 Displaying pity towards me, a person whose degradation is unequalled, Ramana the Guru who abides as being and who has no equal, infused me with an experience of grace that is like pure gold. How great is the glory of his grace! Who has the power to sing of it?

396 Tranquillity abides in an appropriate way only for the wise ones, but for people like us, there is only suffering and lamentation. Even so, we, the lowest of the low, entitled only to agitated minds, realised the truth in the heart and were rewarded with true life through the grace of Siva-Ramana, the king possessing the wealth of divine grace.

397 Will the *jnanis* whose understanding shines brightly with the eminent wealth of grace value the wealth of earthly riches that fade? In the presence of this blessing, the wealth of grace that surges as Siva-*jnana*, even the much desired wealth of the celestials is useless garbage.

398 I firmly imprisoned in my heart and implanted within it the *swarupa* of the Guru who took me as the target of his grace. The *swarupa* I incarcerated in my heart produced in my consciousness a much-desired harvest of *Sivam*-bliss, taking there the form of undivided grace, consciousness-the-supreme.

399 Through the clear shining of the Guru's grace I realised the truth of pure being that, even for one such as myself, made form to cease and become non-existent. Having this knowledge, I will not think of God with a form but of the grace supreme that exists formlessly in the heart.

400 If you consign yourself to the grace of the Guru, the confusion of your mind will cease, and reality will shine forth. Because [in that state] the chain of karma that fettered the *jiva* has been broken, fear will end, and you will then flourish in the state of liberation, reality, experiencing supreme peace.

401 He exists as the reality, the truth, as never-failing grace-supreme. Through the realisation of the *swarupa* that exists as the Self everywhere, he made me attain as my own nature, closer than the closest, that which is proclaimed loudly by the *Vedas* as beyond the uttermost beyond.

The desire for grace

402 Those true devotees who desire a life of grace will have their desire fulfilled through the Lord. In the same way, those ignorant ones who are under the spell of delusion, and who desire a life of delusion, will come to encounter that life in their minds. Those who wallow in delusion without knowing what is beneficial and what is harmful for them will, through that delusion, value the harmful and disregard the beneficial. They will be lost and will suffer in the sea of world delusion.

403 When there is conflict between [attaining] either grace or worldly prosperity, the great ones will desire only grace.

404 He made me, I who desired nothing other than divine grace, blossom into the very form of grace. In that substratum which shines as grace I saw that I was living as grace.

405 My Lord! My intense and eternal desire is only the extremely

steadfast peace in which I think of nothing whatsoever. If I attain in my heart that grace-enjoyment, possessing a loftiness that rises like a mountain, how then will it matter to me where the sun rises?

Liberation through grace

406 The world of liberation is a unitary wholeness whose nature is divine silence. I, a cur, realised it through the grace of the Guru, my own Self, by adopting an attitude of servitude towards him. [That liberation] has remained for me as an endowment to which I have been entitled from time immemorial. It is not something I have discovered, secured and earned.

407 Through the medium of grace, the divine silence devoid of delusion, I merged in the prosperous life of liberation in which pure being shines. In this state that is nothing but *swarupa*, which shines as the indestructible and pure being-consciousness, the degraded ego-mind ceased, becoming false.

408 Through my Lord's grace I was enlightened with the truth. My nature became full, becoming my Lord's nature, the nature of *Sivam*. Because I rejoiced perfectly in *Sivam*, becoming one with it, a state of perpetual youthfulness arose for me.

409 I was freed from bewilderment in my heart through the power of the victory of grace, the true *jnana* that shines brightly. Whatever events of great consequence may take place, from now on I will not suffer tribulations through them.

410 The supreme greatness of the blessing of grace that has been attained will be clearly known only to those who have experienced a merger with the light of the heart, not to those

who have not. The life of divine exultation which arose as a treasure that accrued through auspicious *tapas* performed in past lives merged in my heart as a direct experience, ending my suffering.

411 It is only through the power of the divine that one shines illustriously [with *jnana*]. There is no other means for redemption. Without the power of divine grace, who are we to achieve the skilled accomplishment in which we become food for the divine, thus ensuring our own destruction?

412 It will be impossible for anyone to enjoy the blissful peace of *swarupa* that shines as the eminent and immaculate *Sivam* unless they attain a life in which they function from the perspective of grace, the *mauna* that is the excellent shining of pure being.

I now exist as grace

413 The *swarupa*-life that shines as the open expanse has a grandeur that can never be forgotten. What endures and shines forever, ending mental afflictions, is the divine experience that surges as the fullness of grace, the being-consciousness that exists illustriously.

414 They say, 'Know the supreme through grace'. Know that grace itself is the supreme.

415 I obtained devotion to grace, that supreme devotion in which there is nothing apart from the Self that one may desire. In my heart Self alone shines spontaneously as the sole target of all my desire. The millions of sense objects do not move my consciousness in any way whatsoever.

416 With my life existing as bliss, in my dictionary even the word 'sorrow' disappeared. Through the perspective of the grace-supreme, which is nothing but love devoid of hard-

heartedness, everything became, in its entirety, supreme bliss.

Effort and grace

417 If we perform *sadhana* to the limit of our abilities, the Lord will accomplish for us that which is beyond our capabilities. If we fail to do even that which is within our capabilities, there is not the slightest fault in the grace of the Lord.

418 Whomsoever *Sivam*, the *Atma-swarupa*, chooses as the worthy recipient of its supreme grace, that person's defective world-directed attention becomes turned towards the Self, and he attains it.

419 He who is attempting to reach the state of truth, the Self, should, through his efforts, remain in close company with the Self until he is able to remain united with that state effortlessly and spontaneously. If, instead, he leaves the Self and moves in association with the non-Self, it will only result in harm.

420 Having fallen and settled in the depths of the sea of delusion that is the life of the world, I, a cruel one, suffered intensely within myself. If, through the power of my Lord's grace, I had not attained in this world the life of peace through the loss of the ego-self, how could I possibly have attained it through my own efforts?

421 If I do not seek and obtain for myself the ultimate attainment, how can anyone else do it for me?

422 Those who meditate on the immutable *Padam*, pure grace, will shine, having won the fierce battle against the army of *vasanas*.

423 Devotion exists in many different forms, varying according

to the quality of devotees' minds. However, only devotion to grace, the *swarupa* that shines as pure consciousness, enables one to reach directly the unsurpassed state of the supreme.

424 If, in your heart, you want to become entitled to the descent of the divine power of grace [*sakti-pada*] whose nature is the purest dharma, perform all actions without a sense of doership, without thinking of the fruits of action, and with a concentrated mind.

The grace of my Lord

425 I deposited myself with my Lord, driving away arising anxieties, making them run and flee. In the power of the grace of my Lord to which I adhered, I attained a life that surged with the treasure of *swarupa*, a life that is endowed with fully blossomed peace.

426 If, in all places, everything I see is only the play of the grace of my beautiful-eyed Lord, how will it be possible for me to forget the light of the feet of my Guru-Lord whose nature is extremely pure being-consciousness?

427 He made me subside into the heart, convincing me that a mind that rejoices in consciousness is the ultimate devotion, supreme devotion. Other than cherishing as red-hued gold that excellent wealth, full of blissful grace, what else is there to be done with the mind?

428 'My' consciousness, whose intrinsic nature is to scrutinise and know the non-Self, does not know the Self that is wholly consciousness. I realised the Self not through 'my own' consciousness but only through the grace of my Lord.

429 Can the power of delusion stay in a heart in which the power of divine grace has merged? As it stood before my Lord who is the very form of grace, the assertive ego, the true form of

delusion, departed and disappeared since it had nothing to cling to and support itself within the heart.

430 Through his grace my Lord gladly enabled the true nature that is the substratum of the three states, beyond the reach of outward-turned attention, to surge within me as the shining of pure being. With a dead mind I now contemplate in a natural way consciousness-the-supreme, the oneness that is entirely grace and which is full of the excelling beauty of my Lord.

431 Only those who obtain the shining of the grace of our Lord will taste, through a tranquil mind, the experience of *swarupa* which shines as stillness. Take that endless life endowed with the blessing of grace as the target, and by dwelling on it with a one-pointed mind settle in the heart as peace.

432 For what reason do the foremost noble devotees merge in the grace of their Lord, ensuring that their entire mind dwells upon it? They merge into the state of blemishless grace, the grace of the Lord, to avoid merging with other flawed states.

433 Those devotees who have obtained the blessing of their Lord's grace will not experience any desire for sense objects because their desire rests as the essence of the empty expanse of the ambrosial *swarupa*, that which exists forever as the light of being-consciousness.

434 Our Lord, the highly accomplished bestower of grace, transmuted *jivas* into *Sivam*. Those who shine, having obtained in this world the perspective of grace, the blemishless *jnana*, through the grace-bestowing teaching given without instruction to true devotees by our Lord, are so so many.

My Lord, the Heart

When Bhagavan and Muruganar speak or write of 'the heart' they are not referring either to a place inside the body or to the more abstract notion of the entity that is the seat of emotions. They are, instead, using the term to denote a dimensionless state that is the source of the individual 'I' that rises and subsequently brings a self-created manifestation into existence. Heart is, in truth, just another of the many synonyms for the Self. The term is frequently used to describe the state and seat of the inner Guru who abides in and as the heart, waiting for an opportunity to attract and absorb devotees' imagined individuality into itself.

My Lord is the Heart

435 He is my Lord who exists as the Heart. When he quelled my consciousness, transforming it into that Heart, I became the pure non-dual land [*bhuma*],[41] that auspicious place which flourishes and shines in itself, the Heart, and as itself.

436 My Lord, existing as the Heart, revealed to me that the Heart alone was my real nature. I embraced the Heart, consciousness-the-supreme, the seat of grace. From now on I will not sink into deluding concepts.

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[41] In *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, verse 1005, Bhagavan explained *bhuma* in the following way: 'The state in which nothing is seen as another object, the state in which nothing is heard as another sound, the state in which nothing is known as another [entity], know this state to be *bhuma*.' This is an adaptation of a verse from the *Chandogya Upanishad*.

437 The Lord whose nature is supreme bliss and who exists as the Heart is, for everyone, the ancient *swarupa*, not a new experience. If one reverses the mind and establishes it in the Self, one can experience the supreme bliss of the Lord whose real nature is the Heart.

438 Our Lord, our own *swarupa*, exists as the Heart. Thinking of him with the mind amounts to denying him as not being that Heart, and rejecting him. It also disregards him, the Self-supreme that is the non-dual truth, through [identifying with] the assertiveness that has risen as 'I'.

My Lord abides in my heart

439 I beseeched my Lord many times: 'My Lord, my Lord, my Lord, come quickly and take up residence in my heart.' He retorted, 'When I already remain established in your heart as the fullness that can neither go nor come, how can I come quickly? Remain still and it will shine.'

440 Having abounding love for me, my Lord abides in my heart as the productive wealth of rain that grants in abundance the unfailing harvest of supreme bliss, ensuring that the drought and famine of afflicting karma never come chasing after me.

441 To prevent me from being pointlessly ruined in the world by desires that generate an abundance of poverty, my Lord, the deathless reality, enabled the radiance of his feet that are the inexhaustible wealth to surge and swell by delightfully adopting my heart as his abode.

442 Because my father dwells in the heart, the marketplace uproar of the limited entity 'mind' is not present at all. Disporting as the Siva *swarupa*, mind now rejoices, having completely come under his spell.

443 In addition to instructing me – 'You are in reality the

Self, the supreme being. Remaining freed from concepts, merge in the heart as tranquil *Sadasivam*' – my Lord also penetrated my heart and remained firmly established there as nothing but the Self, enabling the continuous shining of the experience of *Atma-swarupa*, consciousness-the-supreme.

444 Without being either of these two – 'He is very difficult to attain' or 'He is very easy to attain' – he abides in my heart as my own perpetual entitlement. If one knows this [truth], he, the Self, exists and shines, one without a second. What a disaster that, up till now, I remained deluded, forgetting that Self!

445 The ignorant and deluded mind takes the illusory dream [the waking state] that appears in consciousness to be real and is frightened and perplexed by it. To make the deluded mind cease by being seen to be false, my Lord who exists as the Heart, the source of everything, stood in my heart as the expanse of grace, the radiance of *jnana*.

My Lord is seated in my heart

446 He is present everywhere, but he will not be seen anywhere else other than in the Heart.

447 When I enthroned in my heart the uniquely prosperous one, the king of true *jnana* who has been empowered to play the role of the Guru, tranquillity of mind surged forth like a spring of holy water, and the affliction of anxieties caused by the veiling mind perished.

448 My Lord, who flourishes and shines everywhere as the divine presence, sits enthroned majestically forever in his full glory in my heart. While he is welling up within me as the treasure of being, the perfectly full reality, will the restricting ideas, the thoughts 'I' and 'mine', arise in my heart?

449 By firmly planting his feet of grace in my heart, my Lord seated himself there. Then, when he pulled out and threw away as weeds the *vasanas* that had densely grown there, the sprouting crop of meditation grew luxuriantly and produced a harvest of Siva-*bhoga* [enjoyment of Siva]. Having now consumed this Siva-*bhoga*, my life has flourished, becoming free from the affliction of anxieties.

450 They will say about him, 'He is present here; he is present there'. But if you ask where he is present, he is in the heart. If being-consciousness, the Self, merges with you, he will be present everywhere, making the words 'here' and 'there' depart.

451 What I formerly regarded as 'there' and 'that' the Lord, by bestowing his grace, showed this slave to be 'here' and 'this' in the heart. My life expanded to be the extremely pure expanse, leaving me with no object to pine for, and turning that life into supreme bliss.

Finding redemption in the heart

452 My Lord, to whom none can compare as a saviour! As I conclusively realised – 'I have no one other than you as my true relation' – I clung exclusively to you ever more tightly in my heart, and I was redeemed.

453 Utilising the rising ego, the consciousness that looks outwards towards objects, I sought the Lord who dwells in my heart in every conceivable place except in that heart, but when I turned back towards the Self, he proclaimed, while remaining in the heart, 'Here I am'.

454 I researched into where the world had sprung from and realised that it is not from anywhere [outside] but from the 'I' within. When I established myself within the heart, the perception of the world disappeared, along with the 'I am the body' idea.

455 Was it I who established myself in the heart? Taking great pity on me, he, the Lord whose nature is true *jnana,* himself established me there, driving away the illusory and deceitful ego-ghost known as 'I' that was tormenting me.

456 Without realising clearly the greatness of the *Atma-swarupa* that is full of the beauty of truth, I remained mentally bewildered on account of my infatuation for the world. Destroying that obsession through the shining of his grace, my Lord surged forth in the heart as the glowing revelation of reality.

457 I was lost, having fallen and sunk into the play of infatuating delusion, when my Lord brought about the shining of the non-dual Self in my heart. As a result, I was freed from the 'I am the body' conviction and took on the form of being-consciousness. Now my Lord alone exists, shining as everything for me.

458 The invaluable and pre-eminent wealth is solely the feeling of fullness in the heart, a feeling whose form is the intense peace that arises through abidance in one's own nature. Only those who have totally come under the control of the Self, having lost their ego-self by offering it as a sacrifice, are entitled to this wealth. No one else.

459 Now that my heart shines with the divine plenitude, the *swarupa* of my Lord who on this earth stopped me in my path and subjugated me, I do not value or regard as important the worldly wealth that is experienced in delusion and which possesses the flaw of impermanence. I only value the superb wealth of grace in the heart.

460 Those devotees who seek the state of grace will, without esteeming the world, enter the heart, but if they attribute value to the world, they will not reach the immaculate state of *Sivam* which exists as the eternal refuge, and which is full of the wealth of grace.

461 Though God is present everywhere, unless [he is] known in the heart, he cannot be known anywhere [else].

462 Only those who know themselves to be pure being in the heart, and who abide as that, will flourish in peace.

Muruganar, 1930s.

Spiritual Practice

Self-enquiry

Self-enquiry is rightly seen as the central element of Sri Ramana's practical teachings. On many occasions he said that self-enquiry or complete surrender to the divine were the only two effective ways to realise the Self.

Sri Ramana taught that the individual 'I', the sense of being a person inside a body, is sustained by the mind's habit of looking outwards at things, regarding them as objects that are seen by a subject who inhabits the body. He said that this subconscious process underpins and sustains our erroneous world view. To challenge this false way of looking at things, he encouraged devotees to focus intently on the subject 'I' – the one who thinks the thoughts and perceives the perceptions – and to ignore anything else that the mind wants to dwell on as an object of its attention. The logic behind this was quite compelling. Sri Ramana said that the individual 'I', the sense of being a person, could only exist if the feeling of 'I' was associating with things it was thinking and perceiving. If the 'I' can be trained not to dwell on things that are observed or thought about, the sense of being an individual 'I' will subside into its source and disappear, leaving a true and full awareness of the real 'I', the Self that is not constrained by any location or specific identity.

The traditional way of performing self-enquiry is to start by reining in the mind's tendency to look at and think of objects. When a thought or a perception is noticed, Sri Ramana suggests, 'Ask who is having that thought or perceiving that perception'. The natural and unavoidable response will be 'I am'. Once this step

has been taken, Sri Ramana recommends keeping full attention on this sense of 'I' in one of two possible ways. Either one asks oneself 'Who am I?' and then focuses on this inner sense of 'I', or one merely puts full attention on it without the preliminary query. Each time the mind wants subsequently to wander off in order to engage in thoughts and perceptions again, one should stop looking at these phenomena as objects that are perceived by a subject 'I' and instead focus intently on the 'I' that is experiencing them. Eventually, if one is sufficiently vigilant, the sense of being an individual subsides and disappears. When the individual 'I' no longer has a desire to extrovert itself to enjoy objects that it can think about or see, the power of the Self, acting through the inner or outer Guru, destroys the residual and attenuated individual 'I', leaving the full and definitive knowledge and experience of the Self.

Muruganar frequently uses the compound term *jnana-vichara* when he writes about self-enquiry and spiritual practice in general. It can be translated as '*jnana*-bestowing enquiry' or 'enquiry into consciousness'. The phrase appears in *Upadesa Undiyar*, verse 19, where Bhagavan wrote:

> When one investigates within oneself, 'What is the place where the "I" rises?' the 'I' will die. This is *jnana-vichara*.

Since Bhagavan defines the term here as the search for the source of the 'I', it can be taken to signify the method of self-enquiry that he taught.

Exhortations to practise self-enquiry

463 To a mind that is endowed with self-directed inward vision, ultimate truth can be experienced in half the time it takes to blink an eye. To experience the ultimate truth through *mauna*, the perspective of grace, see to it that the heart is rid of the defect that is the ghostly ego-consciousness.

464 Do not become perplexed by thinking of concepts. Destroy

suttarivu[42] by regarding everything that is perceived as a dream-like appearance. By establishing the mind in the state of chastity[43] through the practice of self-enquiry, settle without the slightest movement in the *swarupa* that exists in the Heart as the Heart.

The necessity and importance of self-enquiry

465 Unless the mind thrives as wholly the Self, with its tendencies to look at objects destroyed, it will not be possible to rejoice in the supreme bliss that is wholly consciousness. The wise course, therefore, is to see that the mind subsides into total harmony with its source in such a way that, instead of scattering itself in multiple ways amongst the sense objects, it becomes wholly the Self that remains forever unchanged.

466 Only if the mind becomes one with the Self will the prosperity that is the triumph of intense peace be clearly revealed. However, if the mind repeatedly goes out, spreading itself in the many concepts [that are the sense objects], the only result will be the contemptible existence of an uninterrupted succession of miseries.

467 The only powerful sword that is capable of cutting attachment to the body is abidance in the state of being-consciousness, the experience of authentic love for *Sivam*. The ego that rises as 'I am the bodily sheath' will bow its head only in the state of Self-abidance that is attained through *jnana-vichara*.

468 How can he who does not know even the truth of the first person [I] know the truth of the second [you] and third persons [he, she, it, they] which are alien to him? If he enquires with skill into the truth of the first person and

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[42] *Suttarivu* is the divided consciousness that has split itself into seer and seen. In this state an internal observer (the subject) is looking at or thinking about objects that are thought or noticed.

[43] The state of being committed to the Self, not looking for external stimulation from the senses.

realises it, then [it will be known that] the truth of the second and third persons is not different [from the truth of the first person].

469 How can he who does not know the truth of himself know the truth of the Lord, his substratum? If he enquires and knows his own truth, then the fake prime entity that claims to be [the individual] 'I' will merge in the Lord, his truth.

470 In a mind that has known Self-nature and which abides firmly as that Self-nature, what other alien object exists to be known? Therefore the foremost dharma is to safeguard fully the dharma of seeking the truth of oneself, eradicating the concepts of the degraded mind that are alien.

471 The reality shines within the intellect as pure consciousness. It does not exist in that busy and noisy bazaar, the arts and sciences that are mastered with the intellect. The supreme attainment of *jnana* exists only through the enquiry 'Who am I?' It is the knowledge that arises by following the I-sense within oneself.

472 The duty that should be completed first is to fully experience the real import of 'I' by diving into the Heart through the enquiry 'Who am I?'

Who is qualified to pursue enquiry?

473 Know that the *jnana-vichara* that bestows Self-knowledge is only for those who have attained purity of mind by softening and melting within. Without this softening and melting away of the mind, brought about by thinking of the feet of the Lord, the attachment that adheres to the body as 'I' will not cease to be.

474 If you are in the state of being qualified to practise *vichara*,[44]

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[44] Sri Ramana never excluded anyone from practising self-enquiry.

banish everything else as valueless [and pursue enquiry].

475 Bliss is mastering the state of *mauna* and abiding in that state without the 'I' thought and without doing anything. Those who cannot abide firmly in the state that is devoid of any support that one can cling to [*niralamba*] should practise by directing their mind towards a single prop they can hold onto.[45]

The process of enquiry

476 The mind should check the activity of the sense organs that cherish the objects of the senses. It should turn towards the Self and enquire 'Who am I?' in such a way that the imaginary difference that seems to split the one Self into 'I' and 'this' is completely destroyed. It should subside into the Self with full awareness. Such a pure mind will be the expanse of bliss which spreads out as a flood of undivided grace.

477 The unique ray that shines within the *jiva* as 'I' exists as the clue. If the *jiva* unflaggingly traces the source of that ray to the heart, it will discover the supreme and its bondage will cease.

478 To encounter the Self directly one should take one's self as the focal point of one's attention. This is the implicit

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His attitude seemed to be, 'If you want to realise the Self and want to accomplish this through enquiry, then you are qualified to begin the practice'. There are a few scattered references in the Ramana literature where he says that self-enquiry is for 'ripe souls' only, but in practice no one was ever asked to follow another *sadhana* if his first choice was self-enquiry.

[45] Muruganar appended a note to this verse: 'Even that support, which was extremely useful in getting rid of those other supports in the beginning, will, in the end, like the wooden pole used to stir the fire on a funeral pyre, perish of its own accord, after which the support-free reality will shine forth.'

message of the *Vedas* and the *Agamas*, but people do not realise this. Prompted by the many differing statements [these texts espouse], and not understanding their true but hidden intention, people perform many practices in order to know their true nature, which is consciousness. Their efforts are similar to those of someone who, after a lengthy contemplation on the topic, decides to touch his nose by first circling his head with his arm.

479 The fire that manifests from within firewood when that firewood is vigorously rubbed will itself burn away that firewood. In the same way, the *vritti-jnana* [the mode of mind that destroys ignorance] generated by the one-pointed enquiry that bores into and penetrates the mind, will itself destroy that mind.

480 In order to make your truth shine as it really is, make a thorough enquiry and expel the ego, the false 'I' that you have cherished till now through ignorance. Remain totally devoted to Self-abidance in the state of *Brahman* that exists as ultimate truth, and which surpasses all manifestation as the transcendental expanse of supreme bliss.

481 To bring about the total destruction of the mischievous movements of the *jiva-bodha* [the individual consciousness], comprising the three aspects of desire, activity and knowing [*iccha*, *kriya*, *jnana*], your mind should turn Selfwards and enquire into your real nature. If, as a result of that enquiry, you enter the heart, the authentic vision of Kailasa [the abode of Siva] will reach you.

482 It [the Self] dwells concealed in the heart. If one kindles it by penetrating the heart with the *jnana-vichara* 'Who am I?' it then manifests and shines as pure consciousness. From the hearts of those who have enquired and realised it in this way, it dispels the beginningless darkness of ignorance. This pure consciousness alone is the form of the Self.

Self-attention

483 Those whose consciousness is focused in self-attention [attention to the individual 'I'] will not get lost and have their strength sapped by getting caught in the crafty stratagems of the mind-*maya* sport whose power is immeasurable. Avoiding the agony of struggling with it in a head-on clash, they will easily leap over it.

484 Do not suffer by wandering along with the mind. What business do you have with it? Through the attention that holds steadfastly to your truth, the beingness that transcends the mind, attain that truth and conduct yourself as a mere witness to that mind.

485 The means for transcending concepts is the selfward-turned consciousness which enquires into its source.

486 Directly attempting to quell the rising of the ego,[46] which cannot be restrained, is a waste of one's effort. If [instead] one unshakably puts a focused attention [on its source], the ego will automatically get paralysed and lose its tendency to rise aggressively.

Reaching my Lord through enquiry

487 In what way did our Lord [Ramana] experience the Self directly? In the same way, you also behold him.[47]

488 Unless you enquire and know yourself as the Self, it will not be possible to see him [Bhagavan] in the same way.

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[46] Bhagavan taught that one should not attempt to suppress the mind in order to prevent thoughts from manifesting. He said that one should, instead, transfer attention from rising thoughts to the one who is thinking them.

[47] Sri Ramana realised the Self in a single act of self-enquiry in 1896. What Muruganar is saying here is that one can only experience the true Lord Ramana by making the individual 'I' vanish in the Self.

489 I adhered to the authentic path of self-enquiry bestowed by the Lord. Through the sharpness of that seeking, the mind, the limited entity, died and shone in my heart, assuming the nature of the supreme reality, the being-consciousness that cannot be thought of.

490 Because the expanse of grace, the truth of consciousness-light, became condensed into 'I', my mind transformed into *Sivam*. The enjoyment of divine peace occurs perfectly and perpetually in my heart devoid of even the slightest outbreak of thinking and forgetting.

491 The self-attention established silently by the *jnana* Guru in my heart put an end to 'I' and 'mine,' states brought about by ignorance. The practice [of self-attention] initiated for me the rising and shining of a life of grace, the pure bliss of *mauna* that possesses the blessing of *swarupa-jnana*.

The desire for sensory indulgence

Sri Ramana taught that it is the mind's never-ending compulsion to seek stimulation and entertainment in objects which are registered by the five senses that keeps attention away from the Self. He said that at a very fundamental level we project the world we see in front of us because we have a profound latent desire to enjoy and experience the things that we see in it.

The individual 'I', instead of looking at itself and withdrawing into its source, chooses instead to extrovert itself and indulge in thoughts and perceptions. Sri Ramana insisted that the 'I' that desires and experiences all these things will continue to exist so long as it has a diet of sense impressions to feast on, but when attention and desire are withdrawn from these perceived objects and focused instead on the thinker of thoughts and the perceiver of perceptions, the 'I' will be compelled to subside.

This is the key element in understanding why and how self-enquiry works. Sri Ramana maintained that the individual 'I' cannot exist in isolation, in a state when it is not associating

with thoughts, desires and perceptions. If those associations can be severed by focusing on the 'I' and by simultaneously ignoring all the things that the individual self wants to indulge in, the 'I' will begin to sink into the Self and disappear. Refusing to pay attention to the things that the senses want to enjoy is therefore the first step on the path to successful enquiry.

Sri Ramana did not advocate suppressing desires for things that the mind and body perceived. He said that one should instead transfer attention to the experiencer of the desire. If this is done repeatedly and vigilantly, the desire to indulge in mental and physical phenomena will diminish and it will become progressively easier to focus attention on the 'I', the source of those desires.

492 For those who keenly desire as their principal priority a merger with the beauty of grace, the *swarupa* that abides in the heart as pure consciousness, it is not even slightly acceptable to have any connection with objects enjoyed by the senses, which are concepts of the fake entity, the deluding consciousness.

493 The world, the powerful attachment, tramples on and ruins those who have become its close companion.

494 Unless the ruinous desire for things perceived definitively ceases, there will be no way to derive benefit from an intense desire for *Sivam*. Those who have attained the intense desire for their own kingdom of ultimate truth should become free of the desire to taste sense objects and should then enquire into and know the luminous supreme.

495 Enjoying fault-filled and ignoble sense objects amounts to committing adultery, having forsaken one's own husband.

496 Those who suffer, caught in the net of deluding worldly desires, are no different from those caught in the snares of a whore.

497 Are those with sharp discrimination obliged to accept as

their everlasting attainment and fortune anything other than that one thing, the reality? Who has ever attained peace by acquiring any object in this boisterous and turbulent world that surges like the sea?

498 Through the undesirable desire for sense objects the sugarcane mind will become the bitter neem.

499 Those devotees who are convinced that God is their sole goal and who live meditating upon him will not experience deluding desires for this world. They will hold on firmly to their meditation, regarding it as a bounden duty. They will renounce all worldly associations as follies that arise from ignorance, the absence of *jnana*.

500 The wise ones will fast by not thinking of anything else other than the Self whose form is consciousness, the ambrosia of rare savour. Worldly people who observe fasting by refraining from eating will be consuming degraded sense objects with their minds.

501 Those who do not realise the real aim of fasting will not attain the true benefit of fasting. If they realise the truth of fasting and fast accordingly, they will be continuously performing an extremely great *tapas*.

Transcending the addiction to thoughts and perceptions

502 The *sadhana* is to withdraw the mind from the sense objects of the world, which arise through the ignorance of taking the body to be 'I', and fix it in the feet of the Lord's grace, pure consciousness. For those who are fully convinced of the efficacy of this *sadhana*, and who are able to practise it, there will be no need to abandon it to perform any other great *tapas*.

503 Until everything shines wholly as *swarupa*, eschew all [perceived phenomena] as your enemies.

504 The expanse of grace, one's own truth, needs to be known through careful scrutiny with a subtle and keen intellect. Unless it shines clearly, it will be impossible to enjoy the wonderful peace that is free of the torment of the ego-mind, the great delusion which whirls and wanders, desiring only imaginary sense objects, taking them to be real.

505 The world appearance, a collection of the five sense perceptions, deludes the mind, making it impossible to differentiate between what is real and what is not. However, those devotees who are possessed by the maddening desire for God's grace will attain liberation through true *jnana*, the light of consciousness, freed in their minds from the deluding madness, the obsession with the world.

506 The *sadhana* that one performs is just for the death of the ego-mind, which cherishes only the objects of the senses that appear as separate and different [from itself].

507 The only true victory is the conquest that arises through the genuine *jnana* which overcomes the senses, destroying completely the infatuation for the false world. What is no victory at all is the impetuous rising [and subsequent accomplishments] of the bewildered mind that has drowned in the sea, the dream of delusion that arises through ignorance.

508 Those who abide as pure consciousness will experience the truth, the Self that exists as their own intimately close associate, but if the mind is allowed to move about among the senses through the pathways of the five senses, life will become shameful, losing its beauty.

509 If consciousness leaves the heart and manifests outwardly, it will experience perplexity through the false and deceitful sense objects. If it becomes extremely clear and remains

firmly settled in consciousness-the-supreme, pure grace, and then merges with it, life will become blissful.

510 May the virtuous conduct of Lord Ramana, who is the outstanding example for renunciation, become a defence that fills the mind of the foolish *jiva* who, through an unsteady discrimination, has lost its stability in the false life of the five senses.

Self-abidance

In *Who am I?* Bhagavan wrote: 'Enquiring "Who am I that am in bondage?" and knowing one's real nature [*swarupa*] alone is liberation. Always keeping the mind fixed in the Self alone is called self-enquiry....'[48]

This high-level definition of self-enquiry excludes all the preliminary efforts to withdraw attention from perceived thoughts and objects. Diverting attention from the content of the mind to the underlying 'I' that has the thoughts may consume most of the time of regular practitioners, but Bhagavan is saying here that proper self-enquiry is not really happening until one learns to hold onto the inner sense of 'I'. This restricted definition in *Who am I?* is consistent with other teachings that Bhagavan gave on enquiry in which he stated, '... really, *vichara* [enquiry] begins when you cling to your Self and are already off the mental movement, the thought-waves'.[49]

This process of clinging to the Self, undistracted by ephemeral rising thoughts that are competing for attention, is the highest level of self-enquiry. When the 'I' retreats into its source and vanishes as a result of this intense effort, the Self reveals itself. This Self-abidance is usually temporary, but repeated practice increases the frequency of these events. As Bhagavan wrote in *Who am I?*': 'By repeatedly practising in this way, the power of the mind to abide in its source increases.'[50]

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48 *The Path of Sri Ramana, Part One*, p. 194.

49 *Sat-Darshana Bhashya*, 1975 ed., p. ix.

50 *The Path of Sri Ramana, Part One*, p. 186.

511 [Mind] manifesting in the form of thought is the obstacle to the mind holding onto the Self.

512 If the mind ceases to associate with anything, it will clearly shine as the space of consciousness.

513 The *jnanis* say that the state of liberation, the fullness of being, is only the tranquillity that abides as pure consciousness. This is the *sadhana* that has to be performed: firmly establish yourself in Self-abidance, and do not at all move outwards through the pathways of the senses and suffer.

514 Performing meditation on the Self in solitude is the most delightful among the delightful.

515 If attaining the natural supreme state, existing as pure being, is a desire that you want fulfilled, then the proper course is to return the mind back to the Self and stay merged there, without thinking of anything else.

516 The ego deserves to be stigmatized whereas the Self alone deserves to be worshipped and saluted. Save and protect yourself completely from the treacherous *maya,* whose form is the ego, by the daily practice of abidance in the pure Self in order that the abidance may become firm and habitual.

517 The Self-abidance that mature *sadhakas* experience repeatedly in the heart is the unforsakable truth that perpetually exists. What completely veils that Self-abidance, perpetually and unstoppably existing as one's own nature in the heart, is the mind.

518 One should ensure that the deceptive mind's form is destroyed through Self-abidance by experiencing in the heart, through careful investigation, the reality that merely exists. If, instead, one trains the mind more and more in grabbing imaginary concepts, this will only result in extending the livelihood of the ego-mind.

519 To abide clinging to the Self is *shanti* [peace]. The cessation and destruction of the rising ego is *mauna*. The consciousness that is free of thinking and forgetting is the experience of *jnana*. The total drying up of *vasanas* is the life of liberation.

520 Self-nature, which is truly your own, has existed from time immemorial. By overcoming the thoughts that spring up, the mind should become calm, one-pointed and merge in the heart. Through the *jnana-nishta* [settled abidance in *jnana*] that then arises, you should experience your real nature to be pure being. The attainment of this state, in which one remains totally unattached, is the only truly excellent accomplishment.

521 If one abides as *Brahman*, there is no birth. Pure *Brahman* is the very nature of the Self, one's real nature. Mind remaining completely still as nothing but the 'I', devoid of the remembering and forgetting that is impelled by the rising ego, is abidance as *Brahman*.

Pramada

The opposite of Self-abidance is forgetfulness of the Self. In this latter state, which Sri Ramana and Muruganar called *pramada*, attention is always focused on things that the individual 'I' thinks about or cognizes. Attention is never resting in or moving towards the substratum of the Self. This obstinate refusal to look at the Self and abide in it is the cause of multiple problems. It allows the individual to arise and prosper; it is the cause of all one's suffering and delusion about who one really is; and it is, ultimately, the reason why one is born again and again.

The individual 'I', thinking that it inhabits a body, embarks on various courses of action. While the individual assumes 'I am doing this', it accumulates karma that ultimately results in the necessity of a rebirth to experience its fruits. *Pramada* enmeshes its victims in the never-ending cycles of birth, death and suffering. When

Self-abidance replaces *pramada*, all these negative consequences are eliminated.

522 To those whose consciousness has become firm, remaining still and motionless, consciousness itself is the supreme. This supreme will only appear as something alien in those whose consciousness has not become firm and who experience inattentiveness [*pramada*]. When consciousness becomes clear, the 'I' [*aham*] that is consciousness will shine in the heart as grace-supreme, revealing that the Self, consciousness, is itself the supreme.

523 There is no other cruel enemy like *pramada*; it deserves to be utterly destroyed in the heart.

524 The mind that manifests in the form of remembering and forgetting is the error that makes one forget the Self.

525 The life of the *jiva* that has ignored *swarupa*, consciousness, will be nothing but misery.

526 The illusory birth that is a confusion of the mind will not leave one and end in any way other than by becoming still through experiencing and realising the Self, being-consciousness. Because of this, those great ones who are attempting to exterminate that illusory birth will, by any means, strive hard to destroy that *pramada* which is the cause of birth.

527 Since it is through forgetfulness, which those strong-minded ones fear like death, that the illusion of birth ensnares us, what alternative means are there to abolish that birth other than the powerful enquiry into one's true nature?

Pramada exposes one to *yama* (death)

Both Bhagavan and Muruganar equate Self-forgetfulness

(*pramada*) with death. This is an idea that is also recorded in *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, verse 247:

> Understand that death [*yama*] is nothing but slipping from the fullness [*purna*], which is the state of the Self, the pre-eminent expanse of true *jnana* that has neither origin nor destruction, the supreme bliss that exists as the source of unceasing and constant love.

Bhagavan also made this comparison in *Talks*, talk no. 317, where he said: 'Inattentiveness to it [the Self] is ignorance. '*Pramada vai mrtyuh*' ['Inattention is death itself.'][51]

When capitalised, Yama denotes the god of death. He is used by both Bhagavan and Muruganar as a metaphor for the spiritual death that is inevitable if one fails to keep attention on the Self.

528 Who has ever merged in Sivahood except by getting focused in the Self-abidance that ensures the destruction of that impetuosity, the frenzied ego? Other than forgetting the Self, consciousness, I have not come to see any other death.

529 The cause for pain and suffering inflicted by Yama, who is *pramada*, is just the veiling ego-mind that does not have the quality of remaining still. If one follows the footsteps of Ramana, takes up the practice of *jnana-vichara* [self-enquiry] and remains steadfast in that practice, the ego-mind that rises as 'I' will die.

530 Only pure consciousness, the reality, is the *padam* [divine feet] that are not approached by illusory *pramada*, the Lord of Death.

531 Apart from [taking refuge in] consciousness, there is no other defence against the death that swallows those possessed by

[51] The line appears in the *Mahabharata*, in *Sanat-sujata-samvada*, a conversation between Sanatsujata and King Dhritarashtra.

the ego-frenzy that rises through an 'I' which aggressively embraces the demeaning body, completely forsaking the Self.

532 Having discovered that the crowded fort of the mind is just a deception, the strong defence that forever remains for me is only the Heart. Not even the enraged Yama, the mind [that forgets the Self,] can approach it. Remaining within that fortress brings one under the protection of the Lord who is *yama* [death] even to Yama [the god of death].

Knowing consciousness

When *pramada* is present, attention is extroverted and fixed on objects that are seen or thought about. Muruganar characterises this state of ignorance as '*suttarivu*', an individual consciousness in which one is only aware of objects that appear in and to the mind. In this state the true consciousness is hidden by the mind's compulsive habit of dividing itself into an external world and a perceiver of it who is localised within the body. When the false 'I' that sees things other than itself subsides into its source and disappears, this dichotomy vanishes, leaving the undivided consciousness (*arivu*) that never splits itself into imaginary subjects and objects. In this state consciousness is known as it truly is.

533 Only pure consciousness, Self-nature, is real. The consciousness that knows things that are alien to it is nothing but a concept. One should therefore know oneself through the enquiry 'Who is the one who knows alien objects?' and do it in such a way that the consciousness that knows objects is totally destroyed in the Self, pure consciousness, becoming *mauna*. This alone is authentic *tapas*.

534 The way to transcend delusion is [by having] a mind that does not forget the extremely pure consciousness, the feet of the Lord.

535 If, without splitting into two, consciousness holds onto the

one subject, then the non-dual being-consciousness that takes the form of unbroken experience will shine of its own accord. Therefore, to make the feeling of difference 'I am different from the Self' become unitary as 'I am the Self', something that happens when the ego dies, direct your mind towards the state of *jnana* and abide in the thought-free state of *mauna*.

536 If, through a careful examination, one knows that the consciousness that enquires in the heart 'What is it that exists?' is actually the reality, that which is, then the power of duality, the veiling perturbations of the mind, will perish and it [the mind] will firmly abide in peaceful repose as the Self in the heart.

537 That which enables the knowing of the one present in the heart as the form of consciousness is the cessation of the consciousness invested in other things.

Muruganar (seated) with Ramanapadananda, his publisher.

The Divine and Real 'I'

The divine 'I'

Although self-enquiry is done by focusing attention on the 'I', on a few occasions Sri Ramana also mentioned that the repetition of the word 'I' could also lead one to its source. Although strictly speaking, this is not self-enquiry, it shares a common goal of taking the 'I' back to its source and making it vanish in the Self. Sri Ramana sometimes said that the word 'I' was the most accurate and most powerful name of God. The repetition of the word 'I' is therefore more akin to *japa* than enquiry.

538 For all individuals their natural, common, auspicious and divine name is 'I'. Although all know this name very well, for some reason the people who know its real import are very, very few.

539 Among all mantras 'I' alone rises and flourishes with the excellence of truth.

My Lord revealed himself to be 'I-I'

When the individual 'I' disappears into its source, what remains is the continuous experience of the real 'I'. Sri Ramana sometimes characterised this as the state of 'I-I' to distinguish it from the limited body-bound experience of the individual 'I'. In Tamil '*nan-nan*' ('I-I') is construed grammatically as 'I am I' since the verb 'to be' is not expressed in sentences of this type. It is the state in which one knows oneself to be the real 'I', the substratum of being that is the Self.

540 The Lord dwells identically as 'I-I', the light of consciousness in the heart, not only for the learned but also for the unlearned. How stupid I was that I remained bewildered, as though I had not obtained him, despite having him existing as my 'I'.

541 Though he is the splendidly transcendental one, beyond the beyond, to me he remains closer than the closest as 'I-I' within my heart. He shines wherever I go as the pure state, the joyous experience of *turiya*. How to describe such graciousness?

542 By altering the *swarupa*, my own Self that shines by itself, I came under the disorienting spell of the false 'I' and 'mine'. My Lord, performing the 'I-I' *jnana* dance in the heart, enabled the *swarupa*, the real first person that shines spontaneously, to flourish.

543 Entering my heart and becoming one with me, he now shines within me as 'I-I', as the extremely-close-to-me *swarupa* revelation. Unlike the rare *Vedas* that declare 'Not this, not this', my Lord, through his shining as 'I-I', expressed without articulating it, 'This is it! This is it!'

The real 'I'

544 Those who rejoice when they see external beauty perceived by the senses do not know the excellence of the reality 'I'.

545 Liberation, the true 'I' whose nature is being-consciousness, is not something that is attained afresh. It is one's own nature from which it is impossible to separate. Since it is the time-transcending pure expanse of consciousness, the beauty of blissful *Brahman*, it is present as the substratum in all the periods of time that are imagined in the Self.

546 One's true nature, the true import of 'I', is the underlying substratum of the mischievous, assertive ego. From the

perspective of the objectifying mind, which is merely the confusion of the individual intellect, it is a void, but when that mind which sees objects is destroyed, it [the true import of 'I'] shines as fullness.

547 Though the real first-person [I], the authentic *Sivam*, shines spontaneously, we do not experience it because it is ignored when the false first person, the ego, rises. If one clears away the impurity of the mind and directs it into the heart, that subtle and excellent consciousness will reveal itself.

Experiencing the real 'I'

548 I approached my Guru Lord, who is beyond relative knowledge, and requested, 'Instruct me in the unique *jnana*'. He replied silently, 'That which is termed *jnana* is only "I". The firmament of supreme grace alone is its form.'

549 Taking the form of the subtle expanse, the supreme one who exists as that undivided vast expanse of grace became my real 'I'. Having formerly suffered as the ego 'I' through the ramifying consciousness, I now firmly abide and flourish as the Self with the base delusion that used to proclaim itself 'I' eliminated.

550 By regarding the benevolent Iswara [God], who in reality exists and shines as 'I' within me, as different from me, I was subjected to error. Then, abiding in the state of grace, I was freed from the idea that God is different from me through my Lord who shone as the one, non-dual *Atma-swarupa*.

551 My true 'I' is beingness, the pure consciousness that views all phenomena as nothing but the Self. I now move around as the unique sun of true *jnana* with a blooming countenance that radiates the light of division-free *mauna*.

My Lord Shines

The shining of my Lord

552 He is the Lord who perfectly captivated me with his compassionate benign glance and who with kindness brought me under his rule by making me his companion. Wherever I go, he shines, burgeoning as the transcendental firmament of supreme bliss. How can one describe his omnipresence?

553 He is the infinite supreme who shines as 'I', as the true nature of everyone, and as not different from them. Since this is so, true worship is only attaining knowledge of one's real nature, *swarupa*, which shines without the forms and attributes that are perceptible to the senses.

554 With everyone and everything existing as himself, my Lord is the transcendental light who shines with nothing alien to him. Through the splendour of his *swarupa*, consciousness-the-supreme, he flourished within me and overflowed, dimming everything and everyone, making them fade away as false.

The Lord made me shine

555 Within me and full of love, my Lord, the *swarupa* that saved me by destroying me, now shines as my own nature. When my life united with his enduring feet of red-hued gold, it became the perfect life of living in the state of being-consciousness in my heart.

556 He, the ancient one who surges as *Sivam*, the true import of the word 'I' [*aham*], mingled everywhere as the expanse of grace. He now shines within me, making *buddhi*, *manas* and *chitta* [intellect, mind and memory,] which once appeared to be real, become unreal and fade away. How can I express my astonishment at this wonderful deed of his?

557 My Lord vouchsafed to me pure consciousness, *mauna* alone, to shine as the target [of my attention]. That division-free *mauna*, the vision of grace, eclipsing the world seen through delusion, now shines as my own nature.

The Lord shines in my heart

558 Unless and until the truth of the Self shines clearly in the Heart, whatever is perceived is only false.

559 He, the true division-free supreme, is present everywhere and at all times as the expanse of grace. Through that grace he merged in my heart as the revelation of the real import of the word *aham* [I], and he now shines uninterruptedly as the occupant of my heart centre.

560 Instead of enquiring what my nature was, I was analysing the nature of my Lord with externalised thought and becoming perplexed. Then, by saying, 'Your nature is only my nature,' my Lord bestowed on me being-consciousness, divine silence, and he now shines in my heart in no way different from me.

561 He, the generous one who is the source of boons, entered my heart and made me shine as a luminary. Then I, becoming someone who was possessed of clear wisdom, was struck dumb, having attained *mauna* in the Lord's feet of grace, consciousness-the-supreme.

562 He cannot be rejected or accepted. He cannot be thought of, nor can he be forgotten, even momentarily. As a result of the

infusion of his power he, the Lord of *swarupa*, truly shines as my heart. In the hearts of those who have seen their real nature he abides as the flood of unalloyed grace.

563 Red-hued Supreme, that dense mass of light impossible even for the gods to know! You made the glory of your own true nature shine clearly in the heart of even this worthless person, [who was living as the] reflected consciousness. Perfect Being! I will never forget you.

564 Having a consciousness in which the mind remains firmly established in *Sivam*, the *Atma-swarupa*, is the only life that has intrinsic eminence. To make me shine in the heart as the form of that consciousness, freed from forgetfulness of the Self, my Lord Ramana whose form is bliss, dwells and glows there as *mauna*.

565 Closer to me than myself, my Lord shone forth in my heart as my own *swarupa*. As it was not alien to me, I flourished in peace, abiding as the real first person ['I'], the *mauna* that is free of remembering and forgetting.

566 Unless the Lord himself shines of his own accord in the heart, will it be possible for us to know and attain the Lord? Let us therefore constantly think 'My Lord, my Lord, my Lord' and abide in the Lord's feet with that thought alone.

567 Was it I who thought of my Lord? He himself made me think of him by shining in the heart. His glance made me bloom into a life of grace whose nature is *swarupa*, consciousness-the-supreme, that which exists as the thought-transcending *mauna*.

568 Was it 'I', the weakling, who thought of him? My Lord himself shines within my heart as the thought [of him], ensuring that the expanse of grace, *mauna*, the Self supreme, the light which shines by itself as a flood, entered and filled my heart.

Book Learning and the Scriptures

The limitations of scriptural knowledge

569 It is the feet of the Lord that are the raft for devotees to cross the ocean of erudition, so extremely difficult to cross. They shine as the essence of learning in the heart of devotees, causing all the many arts and sciences that exist to become concepts in the Self and cease.

570 If, instead of realising the Self by enthusiastically practising the science of true *jnana*, one attains knowledge of the false sciences of the world, this is like paying attention solely to the accumulation of dark shadows, abandoning *Atma-swarupa*, the sun of true *jnana*.

571 Who has ever encountered God, the transcendental being, by searching among the vast assembly of arts and sciences? God does not exist in the body of arts and sciences. Lord Siva exists on the summit that is *mauna*, the pure consciousness that is full of enduring tranquillity.

572 Instead of learning with relish about the science that confers true *jnana*, some people get involved in learning false, worldly sciences and make a lot of noise. Whatever science they may learn, it will only be useful in worldly life. It will not help in the attainment of liberation, true *jnana*, supreme bliss.

573 Unless the tendency of mind that moves towards book

learning subsides, it will be very difficult to abide as the Self.

574 When one has learned to study oneself and rejoices in [experiencing] it, for such a one nothing else remains to be attained and rejoiced in.

Scriptural learning

575 The practice of learning more and more scriptures, ignoring the direct experience that is the attainment of truth in the heart, is more wasteful than going to a forest, collecting dried leaves, and then abandoning them, without warming oneself even slightly by starting a fire to ward off the cold.

576 Unless the many *sastras* – which should be studied in depth by those intent on knowing the ultimate truth – are known and understood through *jnanis* who have the perfect experience of true *jnana*, they will only create confusion.

577 If the difference-free *mauna*, the nature of grace, shines clearly, then *veda* [scriptural knowledge] will become ignorance.

578 The stacked pile of books kept on the stool adjacent to the sofa on which sits Venkata in royal majesty can be compared to a decorated and orderly pile of juiceless bagasse that stands next to a form made out of extremely sweet sugar candy.[52]

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[52] This verse alludes to the Saraswati *puja* in which scriptural texts are formally worshipped. Apparently, this ceremony was done once a year in Sri Ramana's presence. 'Bagasse' is the term for what remains of the sugarcane plant after the juice has been extracted. The essence of the sugarcane (the true knowledge to be obtained from holy books) has been made manifest in the adjacent form of Sri Ramana.

My Lord ended my desire for book knowledge

579 Instead of completely eradicating concepts through my learning, I became more and more involved in evaluating them. But then, through the shining of the grace of my Lord who ruled excellently over even this insignificant person, I experienced the *Brahman*-nature that caused the concepts in my heart to halt and come to an end.

580 O good books, you who helped me with the science of grace, true *jnana*, the worthy accomplishment! Nothing exists in me that enables me to cherish and protect you. Because of this impoverishment, I now appear to be someone who is indifferent towards you extremely noble souls.

581 I did not learn and master other *jnana* scriptures to make arise the experience of true *jnana* that frees one from falsity. The only things I studied in depth are the few scriptures that my Lord proclaimed concisely in an aphoristic form [for his disciples] to study and understand.

582 I am not an unlearned man. Though I am a scholar, my scholarship did not rid me of my anxieties and afflictions. But through the *jnana*, the grace of my Lord that effectively put an end to thoughts, not only were my afflictions and anxieties dispelled, I also attained my real nature of authentic bliss.

583 Because the heart of this ignorant person now shines, gushing forth with the power of the supreme *jnani* who is Dakshinamurti,[53] I became entranced by and lost in the supreme *swarupa*. I will not learn about anything else since I no longer have a mind that can do this.

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[53] A manifestation of Siva who is held to be the founder of all Guru lineages. Bhagavan's devotees felt that he was a modern manifestation of him since Dakshinamurti traditionally taught and enlightened his four disciples through the power of his spiritual silence.

584 Through the perfect fullness of the experience of abiding as the grace expanse, I now find there is nothing else to learn. The assertiveness that arose as the restricted entity ['I'] subsided into *mauna*, causing the 'I' that deemed itself to be an independent entity, and which engaged in learning, to feel ashamed and vanish.

585 Without realising the true import of the saying 'Die and be redeemed,' I was in a state of great busyness, furiously sweating away on account of the rising ego. As if cursing me, he said, 'May your intellectual prowess be dead and your mischief come to an end'. Through the power of his command he killed me. The ego died and his curse turned out to be total redemption in my heart.

Bhagavan reading in the old hall.

The Eye of my Lord

When Bhagavan composed *Ulladu Narpadu*, verse four, he described the Self in the last line as 'the infinite eye':

> If one's self is a form, then it follows that the world and the Supreme will have form also. If one's self is not a form, who is there to see their forms, and how? Is there anything that is seen whose nature is other than that of the eye [that sees]? That eye is in reality the Self, the infinite eye.

When Bhagavan commented on this verse[54] he said that perceived objects are of the same nature as the one who is doing the observing. A physical eye, for example, sees physical objects, and a mental eye in the dream world sees mentally-projected objects. However, he said this line of logic cannot be extended to the way the *jnani* 'sees' since he taught that in *jnana* there is no organ or faculty that cognises separate, independent objects. In *jnana*, he said, seeing takes place, but without the self-created dichotomy of seer and seen. Bhagavan characterised this way of seeing and knowing within the Self as 'the infinite eye'. The infinite eye is not located anywhere, such as inside the *jnani's* body. It is the immanent Self in which knowing and seeing take place.

In Sanskrit this perspective, this way of seeing and knowing, is usually termed '*jnana drishti*' – the vision or sight of *jnana*. Though Bhagavan did sometimes use this term to describe the perspective of the *jnani*, he also used Tamil phrases that are translated here as 'the infinite eye' (*andamilakkan*) and 'the eye of *jnana*' (*jnanakkan*).

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[54] See, for example, *Maha Yoga*, 2002 ed., p. 83.

The eye of *jnana*

586 I was sunk in the profitless and degraded senses that constitute the kingdom of this earth when he who rules with the eye of *jnana* revealed to me the sovereign kingdom, the supreme expanse of consciousness, enabling me to reign over it under his golden feet. Consequently, I was firmly established in the life of ruling this heavenly kingdom, absolutely free from the delusion of desires.

587 As I myself exist continuously as the eye of *jnana*, that which shines in consciousness as the unceasing [underlying] perception for that eye is 'I' alone. Since this is so, how can my vision bifurcate into subject and object? My being-consciousness ended up as the experience of *mauna*.

588 He is the Lord who has merged in my heart as the eye of *jnana*. He is the Lord who abides and shines as the expanse of true *jnana*. He abides with joy in my heart as the unthought thought, as the literary work of *mauna* and as the beauty of my *swarupa*.

589 By shining as a luminous lamp of *jnana* in my heart, my Lord, the transcendent one, became on this earth itself my eye of grace, free of the delusion caused by ignorance. Through the grace gifted as alms by Guru Ramana, the benevolent donor, I, a wretched pauper, became a millionaire who possessed the treasure of grace.

The infinite eye

590 In the authentic experience of true *jnana* the eye that is the Self merged with my heart as the infinite eye. Consequently, the extremely pure and highest goal, a life of dwelling in the heavenly expanse of grace that is divine silence, enfolded me even upon this earth.

591 You reigned over me with your cool compassion, preventing

me from treading the path I was following. Through your grace I now effortlessly contemplate you, you who are impossible to think about. My life blossomed into the expanse of grace, the beauty of *swarupa* that shines as the infinite eye, the eye of the Self.

592 He [Sri Ramana] who is mad with grace and who gave wealth to Kubera [the god of wealth] granted me his infinite eye of grace. I now live prosperously in the majestic and glorious life of grace that shines in the heart, a life that makes the wealth of Kubera become trivial.

593 My mind is luminously radiant with the nature of *swarupa*, that which shines as the infinite eye, the true eye. Therefore, through the tranquillity that is full of the goodness of the *mauna* which is difficult to secure, I now contemplate the supreme that is innate to all and which thought cannot possibly reach.

The vision of *jnana*

594 A life of living in harmony with supreme *Sivam*, the reality, is endowed with the strength of *mauna*-grace. Through the fascination of such a life this world, instead of appearing as an object comprising wholly of earth, was experienced by me to be nothing other than the red-hued gold of the captivating *Sivam*. This being so, the nature of the world is determined by the way it is viewed.

595 Wherever I go and whatever I perceive, in all those places and objects I see nothing except the grace of the Self. All places and all objects are only manifestations of grace, the power of the consciousness of my beautiful-eyed Lord who shines as the one Self.

596 My Lord bestowed on me the grace-sight, enabling the bewilderment of mind that is deluded vision to come to an end. In the innate-to-all supreme that exists and shines

as pure being, the mind that is the source of degenerate delusion vanished without a trace.

597 My nature became the expanse of *mauna*, the absolutely perfect fullness, making everything that I see become nothing but the unique Self. There is now no art or science for me to master and delight in. Nor is there a fortune for me to attain and rejoice in.

598 The shining perspective of true *jnana* [*jnana drishti*] that becomes full and complete in the form of Self-abidance is only the extinction of the obsession with objective awareness [*suttarivu*]. In the *Sivam* whose very nature is the obstacle-free being-consciousness, the reflected consciousness [*chidabhasa*],[55] will vanish, having become a concept.

599 Cherishing the world is *maya*. The establishment of the mind that cherishes the world in the divine feet is the vision of *jnana* [*jnana drishti*]. The being-consciousness that shines in the form of 'I-I' in the feet, as one's own nature, will bring about the total eradication of the delusion that is the mind.

600 When the vision of grace that is the transcendent *swarupa* became my eye, I became lost as my mind remained continuously captivated by it. The vision of the burgeoning objects of the senses dimmed and completely faded, losing its charm, before finally entering and subsiding into consciousness.

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[55] Vedanta postulates the existence of *chidabhasa*, the reflected consciousness, as a means to explain the mechanism by which the appearance of a world is projected by an individual. Bhagavan also used this explanation, but occasionally he pointed out that the *chidabhasa* did not really exist.

Individual Identity

In Sri Ramana's explanations of individuality the ego is the entity that rises, attaches itself to the body, proclaims itself to be 'I' and then identifies with the body it has chosen to inhabit. It interacts with the self-created world it sees around itself, experiencing pleasure and pain through the various things it chooses to associate with and indulge in. It covers up the reality of what one truly is. So long as one assumes this is what one is, the truth of the underlying consciousness in which it appears and disappears will not be known.

The nature of the ego

601 That which exists as the primal source of all concepts is the ego, the deluding deception known as 'I'.

602 That which makes the one appear as if it has become many is the rising of the ego-delusion.

603 Being-consciousness, the supreme that shines everywhere when the ego ceases, will not be seen anywhere if the ego rises.

604 The Self is always fault-free. The one who rises as 'I' [and sees the faults] is the culprit.

605 Those who are in the grip of the ego will be frightened on seeing the ultimate truth, *jnana*, the excelling *kaivalyam* [oneness, the state of liberation].

The necessity of destroying the ego

606 Lakshmi, liberation, will not show her face unless the rising of the ego-delusion ceases completely.

607 Only when the error, the mind that perceives differences, is destroyed, will the experience of *Sivam*, the non-dual *jnana*, well up in the heart. The ego 'I' that associates with one through ignorance is the cause of the quality of mind that generates differences. It is therefore wisdom to see that this falsity is utterly annihilated.

608 The ego-mind alone is the primary vessel that gathers and holds within itself all faults and shortcomings. The egoless state, the permanent experience of *swarupa* in which the ego-mind has perished, never to appear again, alone deserves to be termed the state that perfectly possesses all the virtues.

609 The state of bliss exists as one's own nature. It is the delusion-filled, false, body-bound ego-mind which makes one imagine that this state of bliss has to be created afresh in its entirety, [making one] take up the performance of some *tapas* to attain it. First, therefore, destroy that ego-mind, without allowing it to revive.

610 *Jnanis* say that eradicating the false ego is the attainment of *Atma-swarupa*, the reality, the surging *Sivam*. That which veils the Self that truly exists, not allowing it to shine, and which experiences delusion, is the false ego-mind.

611 Our Lord, the effulgent mass of *jnana*, will abide and shine as Self-abidance only in a heart that remains still, having become totally pure consciousness bereft of the ego. He will not shine in an ego-mind that has assumed the form of the insentient body.

612 The state that cannot be made known will be known automatically if the ego-mind dies.

Ending the ego's rule

613 It is impossible for anyone to dispel the intense suffering in the lives of those whose risen egos have not subsided. The only route to the state of supréme tranquillity wherein one is not distressed by intense suffering is the termination of the rising of the binding ego.

614 That disgrace, the ego, is the entity that feels dispirited when it becomes the receptacle for all one's defects. By meditating on the feet of pure grace that are free of this disgrace, one should see to it that the ego is totally destroyed. If, instead, people indulge in self-pity for the sins they have committed, and feel, 'Oh, what have I done?' what benefit will they derive?

615 When the ego that is the bewilderment of the mind perishes entirely in the attainment of *jnana*, one rejoices in the unalloyed supreme that has become one's own true nature. The bliss of this *jnana*-attainment is permanent. Unlike devotional ecstasy, which is solely limited to thought, it does not stay for a while before subsequently leaving.

616 Since the entirety of manifestation does not exist without the ego, renouncing the ego amounts to renouncing everything. If the ego-mind enquires into its own true nature, it will run away and vanish. In [the consequent] true *jnana* nothing else exists to renounce.

617 The ego that rises first as 'I' is the final concept to go, after all other concepts [have ceased].

Ego destruction

618 With the destruction of the ego, one's true well-being flourishes. Realising this, desire in your heart only the cessation and eradication of the ego 'I'.

619 The ghost of the ego-mind is the aggressive assertion 'I' that takes the form of the feeling 'I am the doer'. The glorious state in which it has completely died shines as the pure state, the experience of tranquil *Sivam*. Only this unsurpassed state of truth is free from even a trace of wretchedness and disgust.

620 Only the supreme renunciation that is extolled by *jnanis* who shine as pure consciousness deserves to be the pre-eminent *sadhana*. Know clearly that the nature of this renunciation is the total loss and destruction of the rising ego, the source of delusion.

621 Destroy the inner attachment, the deceitful ego which, through delusion, enters and settles firmly in the swarming objects of the senses. Remain merged in *swarupa* in such a way that that your mind settles firmly in the heart, experiencing 'I am *Sivam*', and remains there, captivated by *swarupa*.

When my ego ended

622 The fundamental cause for the distressing experience of fear is the delusion of duality caused by the sprouting *anava* defilement[56] that manifests as the insignificant ego. When this ego died, becoming prey to the being-consciousness that is grace-supreme, a life of trembling in fear came to an end.

623 Through the lamp of the *swarupa*-truth that shines in the heart, the concepts of the veiling ego-mind departed and vanished. In the ensuing state that is wholly grace, and which has become extremely clear, my consciousness shone, imbued with extreme tranquillity of mind.

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[56] *Anava* (the ego) is one of the three defilements (*malas*) in Saiva Siddhanta. The other two are karma and *maya*.

My Lord destroyed my ego 'I'

624 As a simpleton who does not know himself, will it be possible for me to enquire and know your nature as 'this'? Because that which deems itself as 'I' perished in the experience of true *jnana*, the *mauna* bestowed by you that is full of distinction, I experienced you as my own nature.

625 My Lord exists as the one who deserves to be attained. By abiding uninterruptedly day and night in my heart, he caused the destruction of the deceptive ego-embryo in his authentic state, that extremely clear experience of *Sivam*. Because of this he will never, from this point on, become even slightly separate from my heart.

626 Having become him, freed from the ego defect, I disport in the natural state in which the supreme Self-abidance does not break up even slightly. Because of this I will now rejoice, performing the great dance for my Lord who brought about the ruination of the very word 'ego'.

627 The Lord is not known by anyone except those who obtain the experience of *mauna*, that which is wholly consciousness. Seeing that I myself was the obstacle to attaining the state of supreme bliss, he destroyed the ego 'I', paving the way of *mauna* in such a way that I could ascend to the expanse that is wholly bliss.

628 My Lord's wealth comes from the *jnana* experience, the transcendental *mauna*. Since the ego-mind 'I' came under his control and perished completely, grace – the pre-eminent wealth that is absolutely free from desires and which is attained by true devotees – arose and filled up my heart.

629 He whose nature is pure consciousness will shine in a heart that is free from thought, but to those who rise as 'I', he will not show his face. Taking pity on me, I who possessed the

bondage of attachment to karma, he cut off the ego-knot, the deluding deception that arose as 'I'.

630 Lord who transformed me into pure eternal *Sivam*, the Self! How I deluded myself, imagining that a separate person 'I' actually existed! How I smothered the true life of living as the expanse of consciousness-the-supreme through my ignorance, the ruinous ghostly consciousness, 'I am the body'!

631 Only if an individual 'I' existed could it be possible to utter mentally the phrase 'I am he'. Taking the form of the expanse of grace-supreme, my Lord swallowed me and destroyed the 'I', thus giving no scope for saying 'I am he'. Having united non-dually with him, I recognised my nature as the infinite eye and became still.

632 In the effulgent light radiated by the ruddy sun, the *swarupa* that shines within my heart as my dear soul, I do not see the false first person, the assertiveness that rises initially as 'I' before becoming the cause of all distress and misfortune.

633 By terminating completely the rising of ego-delusion, my Lord brought me under his rule. In the form of the pure supreme expanse which is the mere being-consciousness in the heart that exists as the natural 'here' experience, he seized me, making the word 'there' become meaningless and false for me.

634 As the red-hued sun, the effulgent mass of Siva-*jnana*, my Lord shines forth in my heart, completely ripping apart the void that is the darkness of ignorance. In the direct experience of *swarupa* that surges as perfect clarity in my heart, the ego-mind, whose form is individual consciousness, lost its lustre and became dim.

635 Whosoever has clearly seen the dead ego, they are the liberated ones. They will not experience delusion again.

Siddhis

Supernatural powers (*siddhis*) can be sought and attained by the ego-mind, or they can appear spontaneously after realisation has been attained. If they are desired or attained while one still identifies with the individual self, they create bondage. If they appear uninvited after realisation, they are simply expressions of the power of the Self. Unlike the unenlightened, who utilise their power as an act of individual will that is aimed at producing specific results, the *jnani* has no desire to accomplish anything through the powers that manifest in him.

636 Until the ego-mind, the bewilderment, is completely destroyed, the infatuation for *siddhis* will not cease.

637 The true attainment [*siddhi*] is to realise the truth of oneself, the Self, and abide as that Self. The other eight *siddhis* [supernatural powers] beginning with *anima* [shrinking oneself into a minute form] are only imaginations experienced in dreams.[57] Those who do not realise this truth and who exert themselves, performing yoga for the sole purpose of attaining these *siddhis*, are plunging themselves into ignorance.

638 My Lord perfectly performed the *siddhi* of bestowing true *jnana* as an instantaneous and wonderful act of grace that enabled *Sivam*, shining as the empty expanse, to enter and illuminate my heart, I who had fallen from virtue through the straying mind. This is truly the wonderful trick that bestows reality.

639 Innumerable *siddhis* arise and accumulate in the feet, the light of *swarupa*, the unalloyed grace that has begun to shine.

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[57] There is a traditional list of eight *siddhis* that appears in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*.

However, why should any desire for them arise in me, I who abide truly as those shining divine feet, the *swarupa*?[58]

'I' and 'mine'

The ego is half of a linked pairing that is known as the 'inner and outer attachments'. The 'I' that claims it occupies a body and sees a world in front of it is known as 'the inner attachment'. When it extroverts its attention and claims ownership of things it sees and interacts with, this is 'the outer attachment'. The two together are conveniently known as 'I and mine'. Elimination of the inner attachment 'I' automatically removes the outer attachment of 'mine'.

640 For those who embark upon destroying the 'I', knowing it to be the primary fault, why indeed have the idea of 'mine'?

641 The ignoble ghostly mind's agitation, thinking 'For me, for me,' is the evil delusion.

642 I have nothing of my own. My Lord too, as a consequence of his nature, has nothing of his own. This worldly life of delusion with its unceasing anxieties belongs exclusively to those who sweat within, struggle and feel 'For me, for me' whenever they encounter objects.

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[58] Muruganar is indirectly hinting here that *siddhis* came to him as a consequence of his abiding as the Self. Sadhu Natanananda once composed the following verse in which he stated that all of the traditional *siddhis* came to Muruganar uninvited:

> Murugan[ar], the liberated person has attained the *siddhi* of *jnana* by totally directing his mind towards the path of liberation without letting it get scattered in the way of *siddhis*. Though he does not desire *siddhis*, all the eight great *siddhis* come and remain at his service.

This is verse ten of a work he composed entitled 'Sixteen Verses on Murugan', published by Srimathy Yogambal.

643 Realising that the cessation of attachment is only the cessation of inner attachment [the ego], completely abandon that profitless attachment.

644 If the ego known as 'I' is absent, nothing exists as 'mine'. The attainment of liberation is only the destruction of the ego.

645 Who is there left to say 'Nothing is mine' after the mind that imagines 'I' and 'mine' has become false and ceased?

Ending 'I' and 'mine'

646 Though the *jiva*'s mind is associated with the binding feelings of 'I' and 'mine', it will, through the practice of *jnana-vichara*, the enquiry 'Who am I?', attain its real nature, the *Brahma-swarupa* [*Brahman*-nature] in which there is never the least scope for 'I' and 'mine'.

647 Since I have drowned in the effulgence of the state of liberation, the differences involving concepts of the mind, which arose through a deluded understanding, have perished. As a result, I have attained union with the fullness of grace in which the twin attachments of 'I' and 'mine' became false and ended.

648 Because I have merged with the sacred consciousness, the reality of my own Self that shines fully and uninterruptedly in the heart, without the twin delusions of 'I' and 'mine', I am unable to follow the other practices enjoined by the scriptures.

649 The rising ego is the cause of the manifestation of the concepts of the fragmented mind both internally and externally. If you are courageous enough to remain motionless without that ego and in such a way that all manifestation totally ceases, becoming a void, *Brahman* will shine everywhere as nothing but supreme bliss.

650 I subjected myself to poverty by thinking 'For me, for me', but now he rules over me, having transformed me into *Sadasivam*, that which has not a single thing as its possession. Unless the ego rises through forgetfulness, which is a delusion of mind, the feeling of 'mine' will not rear its head in the heart.

The 'I am the body' idea

651 Without realising the truth that they exist at all places as the Self, people who regard themselves as being restricted to the form of the body will have an oscillating mind that will run everywhere, wandering around in constant motion. They will not acquire anything that will endow them with greatness, irrespective of which place they choose to go and live.

652 Those who have the ego-free consciousness that transcends the world and who have the wealth of grace of remaining merged with the Lord's feet will, irrespective of what great worlds they may encounter, not identify with their body and suffer, wallowing in those worlds.

653 In the mind that rises as the ego 'I', my Lord will escape from us, giving us the slip. But if the mind subsides, realising that its real nature is auspicious *Sivam*, he will destroy that 'I am the body' ego completely, transforming it wholly into himself, and absorbing it into a union with his powerful *swarupa*.

654 The life of those who have entrusted themselves totally to the body is a uniquely excellent form of stupidity.

My Lord freed me from the 'I am the body' idea

655 Lord of the expanse! Freeing me from the foul prison that is the 'I am the fleshy body' idea, you made me move about as the expanse of consciousness. To you who shine as 'I', how can I think of offering any recompense?

656 The unreal first person who thinks 'I am the body' slipped away through the grace of my Lord and the true first person in which one exists as the Self, auspicious *Sivam*, flourished. Because this experience of *jnana* flows continuously, my life now exists as the expanse of supreme bliss.

657 The experience, the direct realisation of one's real nature that shines as the Self, surged forth ensuring the total cessation of the ego that thinks, 'I am the body of flesh'. That wonderful river of honey, the honey of true *jnana* that matured as the experience of *mauna*, became a perennial river in my mind.

The ego-ghost

The ego has no fundamental abiding reality. It is just an imaginary entity that we allow to take up residence within us. Its insubstantiality and its ability to cause fear and suffering made Bhagavan and Muruganar liken it to a ghost. This ghostly spirit appears to possesses us, causing endless problems, but when it is confronted and exorcised, it vanishes and leaves us in peace. The analogy also includes the idea that the ego is not capable of functioning unless it attaches itself to a form.

658 How can those ghostly people who do not know that they have been possessed by the ghost get liberated from the ghost?

659 The vicious ego-ghost that rises arrogantly as 'I' is an entity that doesn't really exist. People may, to the best of their ability, either revile and curse one continuously or, with hands folded in supplication, adore one with words of praise, but neither of these can cling even slightly when the ego has permanently departed.

660 When consciousness becomes clear, [it will be known that] there is never any defect in God, the holy being who surges as consciousness, *swarupa*. The cause of distress is the mind,

the ego-ghost-nature that has connected [with us] through the ignorance of not paying focused attention to being.

661 How can the ego-ghost, the attachment to the fleshy body, the consciousness that survives only in ignorance, stand before the presence of consciousness-the-supreme, the perfect fullness? As soon as *mauna*, that which is wholly Self, flourished in my heart, the unreal consciousness that deemed itself to be 'I' ran away and vanished.

662 The ego-ghost that mounts a chaotic display of delusion deserves only death. When I became firmly embedded in the uniquely auspicious state of *Sivam* that bestows the unconquerable pride of divine grace, the ego of its own accord left me for good, redeeming me from the distress caused by that ghost.

The 'I am the doer' idea

If one identifies with the body and with the ego-mind that inhabits it, one automatically assumes that this 'I' is performing all the actions that the body undertakes. This is known as the 'I am the doer' idea. When the 'I' vanishes into its source and bodily identification is lost, the notion 'I am performing activities' also disappears. Activities will continue in accordance with the destined script of that particular body, but there will be no one who chooses to do them or who takes responsibility for them once they are done. The Self will activate the body to do what it has to do, and all these activities will take place without an intermediary and wholly invented doer.

663 There is never any karma [action] independent of the one who performs it. If the performer of karma takes up, as the foremost karma [action], seeing who he is, he will find that he is in no way the doer, and he will end up as the ever-free Self, freed from the bondage of karma.

664 In the truth that radiates clearly through the power of the

science [*vidya*] of grace, the *swarupa* that shines as the pure supreme, they [*jnanis*] have at once abandoned *kartrutva* [the idea that the individual 'I' performs actions] as an error that arises through delusion. For such people, what activity will be an appropriate, obligatory duty? Determine for yourself.

665 My ego suffered intensely by feeling itself to be a doer that was saturated with the poison, the powerful impetuosity that ignites and flares up. Through the supremely great instruction that my Lord gave his mother,[59] who was full of deep affection for him, the assertiveness of my ego died.

666 My Lord, Guru Ramana, the liberated one, shines as the supreme, the pure grace that is one's own nature. The mind should merge in Siva's doing, losing its own doing in such a way that one rids oneself of the ego-mind that has the feeling of 'I' in the body and senses, which are not really 'I'. It is this way of conducting oneself through which one will come under the Lord's sway and be his subject.

Prarabdha

According to Sri Ramana the body is issued with a script of all the actions it is destined to perform. This is known as its *prarabdha* karma. When the 'I am the body' idea prevails, the individual 'I' thinks it is choosing and deciding what it should do next. When the 'I' dies in the Self, there is the knowledge that the body, activated by the Self, is merely performing its predestined activities in the allotted sequence.

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[59] This is a reference to the written teaching that Sri Ramana gave his mother when she first visited him at Pavalakundru in the late 1890s:

> The Ordainer controls the fate of souls in accordance with their *prarabdha* karma. Whatever is destined not to happen will not happen, try how hard you may. Whatever is destined to happen will happen, do whatever you may to stop it. This is certain. The best course, therefore, is for one to be silent.

It is only the body that has *prarabdha* karma. At the moment of liberation identification switches from the occupier of the body to the formless Self that is its substratum. There is no karma of any kind for the Self. It neither performs actions, nor does it have a predestined script.

667 Unless the mind sinks deeply into the state of grace, it will not be possible to overcome *prarabdha*.

668 Suffering through the powerful destiny that cannot be conquered, I enquired again and again, 'What is the means to destroy this destiny?' When my consciousness merely remained awake and still, unable to do anything, while simultaneously feeling no exhaustion in that intermediate state, my truth shone forth.

669 My life became *Sivam* when he granted in my heart the ability of ruling skilfully with the true *jnana* that is not impacted by the weariness caused by adverse circumstances. The weariness that arises through *prarabdha* is for the fleshy body alone. Can it exist for the soul that surges in its entirety as consciousness in the heart?

670 He is the grace-bestowing knower of *Brahman* who exercised lordship over me by destroying the illusory but hellish ego-delusion that had encircled and ruined me. My *prarabdha* perished, unable to find its owner, through the true *jnana* that arose by dwelling in the shade of his feet.

671 Having clearly realised the truth, I have no craving for the world, the mirage that appears in the void of ignorance. I therefore merely exhaust my *prarabdha* by experiencing it, disregarding both prosperity and adversity.

The state of the *jiva*

In Hinduism the human soul is generally designated by the term *jiva*. Different schools of thought have contradictory opinions on

how real and enduring this entity is. Muruganar mostly adopted the traditional Saiva belief that when the *jiva* associates with the mind, it exists in a state of extroverted ignorance and delusion, but when it retreats into its source, the Self, it experiences its true nature, the silence and peace of its source. He also occasionally takes a more advaitic line, saying that the *jiva* ultimately disappears into the Self, leaving Self alone, rather than an experience of the Self.

672 Even if the *jiva* abandons all other associations, preeminence for it will arise only when its association with the noose, the fragmentary mind, is ended. Only the mind, the great delusion, is the fetter. None of the other things will fetter the sweet *jiva* in the same way.

673 Why should the *jiva* whirl about, languishing sorrowfully in the turbulent and swelling sea of *samsara* that is dictated by karma? You should know that the seed of all sorrow and delusion is only the ego, the ancient accretion that is the conviction 'I am the body'.

674 If the *jiva* establishes himself firmly in the *mauna* in which he exists as reality, the substratum, then he himself becomes the supreme being. But if, instead, he gets bewildered by concepts and trembles, imagining himself to be the seer, he will take upon himself the burden of being shackled to sense objects.

675 The restricted *jiva* nature, the reflected consciousness, is only a delusion of the false mind. In the light of the heart, the fullness of being, the treacherous veil that is the concept-generating mind does not exist. In truth, therefore, you only exist as the non-dual reality, pure consciousness.

676 Since one is the form of consciousness, and since that being whose form is consciousness is not two but one, the slave nature [that apparently] exists for the *jiva* in Siva-*swarupa*

can exist only in a state of ignorance that restricts itself to the imaginary individual-consciousness whose form is the mind that associates with the senses. It does not exist in one's real nature, which is nothing but pure consciousness.

When *jiva* unites with its source

677 River Ganga is the *jiva*. The sea is Siva *swarupa*. The merging of Ganga in the sea is the excellence of the loss of the ego self.

678 Instead of practising *bhavana* yoga,[60] realise in the heart the *Atma-swarupa*, the real nature of the *jiva*.

679 If the *jiva* knows very, very clearly that that-which-is is consciousness and consciousness itself is that-which-is, the *jiva* becomes Siva *swarupa*. Even the deceitful senses are then only aspects of the manifestation of the flood of consciousness, the *swarupa* that shines as the true eye.

680 When the red-hued sun of *Sivam* shines in the heart, destroying completely the empty darkness of evil ignorance, the *jiva* consciousness will hang its head in shame, and its face will become pale, like the cool moon in broad daylight.

681 In the heart wherein the experience of *Sivam*, whose nature is *mauna*, is dammed up, the individual consciousness that rose as 'I' remains settled in the bliss of *mauna*, without ever resprouting. How then will it be possible for the *jiva*, rejoicing in the settled state of that dammed-up experience of *Sivam*, to praise that experience with his tongue?

682 The wise ones know as a fact that when the *jiva* is free from the ego that arises in mental confusion, the *jiva* becomes supreme *Sivam* itself. From their perspective, languishing in

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[60] Thinking of or meditating on an object, such as a god, or imagining oneself to be *Brahman* or Siva by repeating a *mahavakya*.

confusion by adopting the form of the impure body that is connected to karma, amounts to reviling *Sivam*.

683 If consciousness becomes clear, then the *jiva* becomes the supreme. If consciousness becomes confused, then the *jiva* becomes the ego-ghost. That which is termed 'consciousness' is the Self, non-dual being. Nothing exists there to be known as 'I' and 'this'.

684 Keep in your mind that the phrase, 'Complete destruction of the *jiva* consciousness that says "I" actually means that it has become completely false. In a mind in which the ego has completely died, the life of the Self will arise spontaneously in the form of pure consciousness, shining as one's own nature.

685 For the *jiva*, the only enjoyment from which it never recoils is the experience of tranquil *Sivam*, something that one is never satiated with. All the other enjoyments one experiences suffer from the defect of ending up sooner or later as loathsome sorrows.

The *chit-jada* knot

The body has no independent consciousness, but when we imagine that we are located inside the body, we attribute a spatially limited consciousness to this occupying entity. This notion that consciousness is tied to and limited to the body is known as '*chit-jada*'. *Chit* denotes consciousness and *jada* signifies the inert body. It is deemed to be 'inert' because it has no activating consciousness of its own. The bond that appears to tie consciousness to the body is known as '*chit-jada-granthi*', the knot that ties consciousness and limits it to the form of the body. The severing of this knot results in liberation.

686 Unless one's truth shines as the vast expanse, the knot between the inert body and consciousness will not be undone.

687 Those who have embarked upon knowing the Self should reject all the knowledge pertaining to the non-Self as ignorance. If, instead, they get caught up in and wallow in knowledge that arises through the error of cruel bondage, the tangled *chit-jada* knot, then the real knowledge that is unlimited consciousness will not reveal itself.

688 The insignificant intellectual power of the *jiva* will have no influence in the divine presence of consciousness-the-supreme, the fullness. The means through which true life is attained is the total death and annihilation of the contradiction [the *chit-jada* knot], the rising ego-delusion that arises as an act of imagination.

689 If one enquires into one's real nature, the knot, the tangled discord that is the great delusion, will snap and one will encounter the empire of the Self in which there is no 'other'. With no ego-delusion existing there, what flourishes as the enduring life is only consciousness, perfection.

Severing my *chit-jada* knot

690 Abiding as the one Self, the reality in the heart, I overpowered the *chit-jada* connection, the delusion that perverted the one into two, splitting it with the sword of grace that is the triumphant non-dual *jnana*.

691 Because the shackling fetter, the knot of the heart, was sundered, the ego's powerful might was destroyed. In the consequent flood of tranquillity that surged and overflowed in the heart, mind and senses ceased, becoming still, and *Brahman*-nature itself merged in the heart, shining as the Self, my own true nature.

692 Through the supreme power of consciousness, the pure grace that brought me, an insignificant person, perfectly under its rule, the connection between the insentient body

and consciousness was sundered. As a result, the delusion of infatuation with concepts fell away completely and eternal liberation, the life of living as the Self-supreme, reached me.

693 Unless the deceitful mind that has sprouted up between the insentient body and pure consciousness is killed, no one can reach the state of *Sivam*. Through grace I disowned that mind, and I rejoiced exuberantly in the life of experiencing *Sivam*.

Muruganar, 1940s

The Mind and its States

In the teachings of Sri Ramana the mind that looks out and cognizes an external world is regarded as being an unreal creation. The 'I' that sees, perceives, chooses and remembers has no reality. When the Self is realised, this mind ceases to exist. Thinking and seeing still continue, but there is no longer the imagination that these activities are coordinated by an entity that inhabits the body. Sri Ramana sometimes uses the term *manonasa* (destruction of mind) to characterise this state. What has been destroyed is the individual 'I', the thinker of thoughts who used to imagine that he lived in a world that was separate from him.

Since thoughts continue to exist after realisation, there is another way of describing mental functioning in this state. In many places it is stated that the mind goes back to its source and becomes one with it. The extreme terminology of 'destruction' is replaced by the idea of oneness: the pure or sattvic mind becomes one with the Self. It disappears as an independent entity, but remains as an indivisible appearance within the Self. Like the moon in daylight, even though it shines dimly, it does not function with an independent light of its own.

Muruganar adopts both perspectives ('destruction' and 'oneness') in his writings, but overall there is a preponderance of verses that view the mind as being one with the Self after realisation, rather than entirely absent.

Nature of the mind

694 That which bifurcated the Self, which is one, is the mind, the delusion 'I'.

695 When one enquires into it, the mind is not cognised even slightly. Mind, therefore, is only an illusion.

696 At any given time the mind will abide as whatever it associates with.

697 If the truth of the mind is enquired into, it will be known that what appears as mind is only consciousness.

698 If the mind is transcended, all else, which does not exist apart from the mind, is transcended also.

699 Unless the continuous impetuosity of the mind subsides, the preeminent joyous exultation will not be attained. Perfect mental tranquillity, free from the affliction that is the scurrying mind, is alone the imperishable true prosperity.

Pure mind

'Pure mind' is the term that Muruganar mostly uses when he speaks of the mind that is resting in the Self. It has no agency of its own, and sees and experiences nothing other than the Self. Having lost its connection with the body, it does not even experience the three states of waking, dreaming and sleep.

700 How can those whose minds have not become pure see the supreme *swarupa* that transcends the mind?

701 The pure mind that has lost its form is indeed the supreme, the being-consciousness that is devoid of waking and sleeping.

702 The pure mind is said to be the form of the supreme *swarupa*, the being-consciousness that cannot be thought of.

703 The pure mind is the form of the supreme *swarupa* that has no actions to perform.

704 If the mind becomes so extremely clear that there is absolutely no bewilderment, then such a mind is indeed the immaculate *Sivam*.

705 Peace – silent, desireless consciousness – is the nature of the pure mind, devoid of attachment.

706 The mind that remains established in *Atma-swarupa* will not be perturbed by identifying with the surroundings.

707 If the mind becomes clear, Siva's eternal presence will harmoniously shine for you.

708 The experience of true knowledge, concentrated supreme devotion [*parabhakti*], will not be encountered except in a pure mind.

Clear mind

709 If the mind becomes clear, that clear mind will itself reveal true *jnana* making it [the clear mind] become the book of authentic grace. Let your mind, therefore, become clear through devotion so that a true maturity arises through which you merge with Siva-*jnana*.

710 Unless the ego-defilement is destroyed and the mind [*chittam*] becomes clear as pure consciousness, will true *jnana* have the opportunity to arise in a mind otherwise dominated by the befuddling ego-ghost? As purity of mind possesses a superiority that is greater than exceptional proficiency in the arts and sciences, it is indispensable for every category of *sadhaka* [spiritual practitioner].

711 If the mind becomes clear, that clear mind itself will impart the truth, becoming the book of pure grace.

I transcended the *avasthas*

The mind that imagines itself to be a person inhabiting a body

alternates between the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping. These three states are known as the *avasthas*. When that identification ceases, one knows oneself to be the underlying substratum in which these three states appear and disappear. This substratum has the name '*turiya*', which means 'the fourth'. Though it has the designation of the fourth state, once one has become one with it, one knows that it is the only real state.

712 The three *avasthas*, comprising nothing but the deluding mind, are associated with the *vasanas* [inherent mental desires and tendencies] that generate duality. When the ego-mind whose nature is delusion has been destroyed, [these *avasthas*] perish and cease. The true state of *turiya*, the pure state, then shines uninterruptedly and uniformly in the heart, gaining strength there. This is the state of *sahaja* [the natural state].

713 The three states of waking, dreaming and sleep will not approach a mind that has merged with *Sivam*, having come under its spell of divine grace, because the *chidabhasa* [the reflected individual consciousness] that perceives the three states and suffers has ended up in *Sivam*, becoming entirely pure being-consciousness.

714 The *vasanas* that caused the dream to appear as the waking state caused me to suffer by taking what was imaginary to be real. It was an unparalleled wonder, then, that *mauna*, the treasure which is the experience of reality, consciousness-the-supreme, absolute being, shone forth even for one such as me.

715 I exist in *Sivam* and I exist as *Sivam*. There is no scope within me for the three worldly *avasthas*. Since I remain merged in the experience of *mauna*, the fullness of grace whose nature is pure consciousness and which is the state of perfect well-being, I have no sorrows, the afflicting mental movements.

716 In the vision of grace I saw myself free of ignorance, as the supreme reality that is the flood of supreme bliss. Through [having that vision,] the deluding *avasthas* that are associated with the afflicting movement of the ego-mind that jumps about and suffers left me, and I became the transcendent *turiya* expanse.

717 Because my Lord merged in my heart as the shining light of being that destroyed my births, I was freed from attachment to the three worldly states, experiencing only the state of *turiya*, the transcendental state of *Sivam*.

Establishing myself as *turiya*

718 In order that I, a rude and obstinate child, did not jump out of my Lord's arms of grace and leave him through the rising of the ego, he, of his own accord, shone as *turiya*, the true waking, in my heart. Like the gold in golden ornaments, all the [three] states then shone entirely as the Self in his nature that is nothing but consciousness.

719 Other than by abiding in the truth whose nature is *turiya*, will it be possible to reject the wicked mind? Experience the eternally-attained liberation by dwelling firmly in the equanimity of Self-abidance that shines without either desire or aversion.

720 My Lord, the very embodiment of Siva, the great being who came and exercised sovereignty over me in an instant, now shines in my heart as the excellent [true] waking state of *turiya*. In the presence of my Lord's feet, which are wholly the supreme light of truth, I felt ashamed as I lost my own lustre, like the moon in the presence of the sun.

721 As the *swarupa*, standing supreme by itself and shining as pure consciousness, existed and shone in my heart as my very own nature, I soaked up the harmonious, supreme, non-dual

Sivam-nature and settled down in the state of *turiya* as the supreme.

722 My Lord, whose nature is consciousness, remains forever as the one and only transcendentally awake state of *atita* [transcendence] that is without sleep and waking. Because he shines in his full glory in my heart as the nature of being-consciousness, my mental delusion slipped off and vanished without a trace.

723 He granted me his indescribably supreme state of *turiya*, having decided that I was fit to receive it. Though that state can neither be accepted nor rejected by virtue of its non-dual nature, only those who contemplate it through their heart are entitled to it.

Muruganar with an unknown young boy

The Gracious Look of my Lord

The liberating gaze of my Lord

724 My Lord not only pushed me into the heart with his gaze, he also pulled while remaining there.

725 He who is the ambrosial ocean of *jnana* swallowed me through his ambrosial *jnana*-filled look [making me become] the expanse of transcendental *swarupa*, *jnana*. I became that ambrosia itself, attaining peace in the heart of my Lord.

726 He is the transcendental light, the embodiment of supreme compassion. He is the Iswara [God] who, taking pity on me, glanced at me with his unblinking gaze, enabling the supreme to shine in my heart. He completely occupied the heart, leaving no vacant space, bestowing on me the life of grace.

727 The Guru who abides as consciousness-the-supreme bestowed his grace through his glance, penetrating my heart and transforming mé into consciousness. Freed from the rising of the ego, the imaginary delusion, I became united with him as the one and only *swarupa*.

728 In [the presence of] him who reigned over me by revealing the perpetual state of liberation I realised the life of grace, the *mauna* that never sets. What can one say of the great power of the look of this embodiment of compassion who

caused the heart of this despairing one to become the expanse of supreme bliss?

729 I resorted to you as my preceptor. Lord! Bestowing your glance, you granted your true knowledge to this ignorant person who was wedded to the false, enabling me to obtain the ultimate goal in my heart and be redeemed. From now on, what could I possibly need?

730 He, the embodiment of peace, is the ever-blissful one. He is the thief who steals the hearts of devotees, remaining as the magnet of pure grace. He swallowed me through the powerful manifestation of peace. Through his mere glance the supreme will be attained.

Experiencing his glance of grace

731 The Guru's glance of grace is the ambrosia with which one is never satiated. Swelling with joy as I experienced it in my mind, there arose in me the life of the unique Self-supreme, a life that became absolutely free of entreaties to him. By rejoicing fully in this life, the quality of *mauna* flourished.

732 The gaze of Ramana, the *jnana*-bestowing Guru, is full of grace. From it ambrosia pours down as if it were cascading from a concentrated waterfall. The life of true devotees who, fearful of *samsara*, have taken refuge in him will attain a verdant lustre, like a crop that has received seasonal rains.

733 The perfect attainment of *swarupa* is abiding motionless in the fullness of grace that is *Sivam*-consciousness, having dispelled the obsession with the false. Through my Lord's gaze of grace, that real nature, pure being, surged forth as a direct experience for me.

734 I do not have the wretchedness of feeling that I am a pauper. I now exist as a millionaire who possesses the fortune of

immaculate grace, *jnana*, because, through the glance of grace bestowed by my Lord, he who is full of compassion, my real nature now shines in my heart as the unlimited expanse.

735 Through the glance of the Guru who is the Lord of Aruna, I experienced in a heart where darkness has perished completely the boundless life that surges as the expanse of grace, the *swarupa* that exists forever without the delusion of death.

736 Through the gaze of grace of my Lord I, a pitiable one, realised the Heart as the true world of Siva, the reality that exists as the expanse of consciousness-light, and whose nature is the natural and clear waking state of *turiya*. As a consequence, I attained the true life of living as the innate-to-everyone supreme, a life that is never associated with wretchedness.

737 Appearing before him as if I were a devotee, I offered worship in his presence. My Lord, saying that even I had his favour, used his look of grace as an *agniastra* [a burning missile] drying up the ocean of afflictions in which I had drowned, suffering like a piece of sugarcane that had been caught in the rollers of the crushing mill.

738 As a result of the gaze of the Lord, full of blissful grace, there blossomed in me a life in which I had in my heart as his bequest the fullness of grace, the *swarupa*, which appears to be a void. I now exist as that empty expanse without even a trace of 'I' and 'mine'.

739 The natural life of shining as *swarupa* that has been existing in the heart from time immemorial initially remained concealed because of the dominance of the power of veiling. Later it shone clearly though the immaculate glance of the Lord that is the triumphant power of grace, *jnana-swarupa*.

740 My Lord bestowed on me the gaze of grace that is nothing but love, causing the bliss of consciousness to spring forth in the heart. The state of immortality merged with me, enabling me to experience as an eternal refuge the state of the Self, the state of peace.

741 Not only those who have taken refuge in our Lord but even those who have taken refuge in those who have taken refuge in our Lord have rid themselves of the mental delusion of 'I' and 'mine'. Since this is so, it is impossible to describe the greatness of the *jnana* experience attained by those who have experienced the bliss-bestowing look of grace of the one who is assuredly God for us.

742 My beloved Lord bestowed on me a life of living in the heart as the treasure that is bliss. His gaze of grace, the perfect ambrosia for my soul, destroyed completely the affliction, the deluding idea of death, becoming in my heart a fortress that never collapses.

743 He is an excellent guide for our life, a treasure trove of compassion who destroys that poverty, the ignorance of people like us. He is the one who exercised Lordship over us with his grace-bestowing glance, a dazzling diamond that brightly radiates truth and reveals the transcendental expanse, enabling us to cross the dark void of veiling ignorance.

His gaze severed identification with the body

744 Frenziedly taking the body to be 'I', I remained bewildered in the world illusion through submitting to the rising ego-ghost's assertiveness. Through the look of immaculate grace implanted by the Lord in my heart I realised the radiant state of *mauna* that is devoid of this rising ego.

745 Through my Lord's gaze of grace I realised that my true form

was formlessness rather than the bodily form I imagined myself to be and suffered from. The afflicting delusion, the delusion of occupying the demeaning body, was destroyed completely, and I took possession of a life of [living in] the supreme light of liberation.

746 When I didn't realise myself to be pure consciousness, I closely identified with the body, rotting away completely by becoming it. Through his look of grace, my Lord who is consciousness-the-supreme, destroyed completely the absolutely lacklustre ego that shrouds [consciousness].

747 My Lord rapidly penetrated my soul through his look that shines as *swarupa*, causing the afflicting darkness of ignorance to flee. As *mauna*, the experience of union with auspicious *Sivam*, arose in my heart, the body-bound ego-consciousness submitted and collapsed.

His gaze dispelled my delusions

748 I ruined myself by closely associating with that devastating delusion, the ego-impurity, without realising that this state is one of possession by a harmful demoness.[61] Through the glance of grace of my Lord that demoness of bondage who is the ego-impurity was totally annihilated and I attained the life of grace, free of suffering.

749 I remained bewildered, having been caught in the dream of the waking state, which is a manifestation of mental delusion. My Lord is the grace-supreme whose nature is the true waking, the *turiya* that shines as true *jnana*. In order to free my heart from this dream that Lord, through his leonine and powerful gaze of grace, gave me one good shake and awakened me to the state of the real, putting an end to both dream and sleep.

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[61] There are eight verses in *Padamalai* (pp. 140-1) in which Muruganar expands on this theme that the mind is nothing other than a female demon that needs to be exorcised.

750 The Lord of grace brought me, I who had sought refuge in him, under his rule by saying, 'Fear not'. The truth that all actions are only God's and none are my own shines in my heart as a clear revelation brought about by the glance of the Lord. Consequently, the ruinous belief, the delusion of the sense of doership, died.

751 In just the same way that a wealthy person will experience suffering if he deludes himself into believing that he is someone who lives by sifting,[62] I, who am in reality consciousness, confounded myself through deluding ignorance into believing I was a *jiva*, and I suffered, becoming an object of ridicule. Then, through the glance of the Guru, pure consciousness arose and flourished in my heart.

His gaze destroyed the impure mind

752 Without purity of mind it is impossible to know the light of the feet that are brim-full with the taste of perfect devotion to grace. It was a consequence of the glance of grace of the one, the embodiment of truth who became my Lord, that this light of the feet came to abide in my heart, I who was wedded to the unreal, the deluded mind.

753 Destroying the [mental] defilement that was like a hard rock, he redeemed me by putting me in the state of auspiciousness. Through his glance of grace that is true *jnana*, the supreme that is said to be beyond the uttermost beyond was attained in my heart as the nearest of the near.

754 The veiling delusion, the assertive ego-ghost that arises as 'I' and becomes the unique seed for likes and dislikes, was destroyed through the penetrating glance bestowed by the

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[62] 'Sifting' is the business of trying to make a living by extracting tiny grains of gold from material that has been discarded by goldsmiths and other users of gold.

Lord. This glance filled me, becoming the place where my desire came to rest and stay, enabling supreme bliss to rise and surge forth in my life.

755 The Lord brought me under his rule by bestowing the blessing of *jnana* through his look of grace, making the mind that was full of cravings die in the immense ocean of *Sivam*, which is full of the expanse of consciousness. Bliss, my own nature, merged with me, becoming the Heart.

756 By destroying through his glance the illusory ego-mind that generates poverty, he ensured that not even a single desire arose in me, his slave. As I wore his feet as a crown, the empire of liberation shone forth, enabling me to rule it under the shade of grace, the white umbrella of victory.[63]

Bhagavan on his sofa in the old hall.

63 In Tamil culture and literature the umbrella is a widely-recognised symbol of sovereignty.

What my Lord Abolished

My Lord ended my suffering

757 As I was suffering by imagining myself to be a moving image, he transformed me into the stationary screen, abolishing that misery. Through the experience of knowing my own real nature, which is free from any suffering or movement, my suffering ended, having been seen to belong exclusively to the mind.

758 Because the wealth of grace that is the silent bliss of consciousness has reached me, taking the form of the reality in my heart, my mind has become a place solely for the shining of the truth of the Self, with absolutely no space in it to experience worries about anything else.

759 My Lord merged with my mind as the sea of joy, the feeling of remaining distinct from the body. Through the glory of the grace of my beloved whose real nature is the Self, I was completely freed in my heart from the affliction of mental agitation that arises though ignorance.

760 I once remained intoxicated with joy, thinking, 'Now that my Lord who is endowed with the wealth of grace has brought my mind under his rule, there are no more anxieties for me'. But then he swallowed me into the expanse, causing the mind [that had this thought] to be lost. This would seem to be the way of living without anxieties.

761 If you ask, 'What is the nature of my mind from which the

consciousness that jumps and rises in the form of 'I' and then suffers has completely departed?' the answer is, 'Thinking joyfully, without any thoughts, of the transcendental expanse of consciousness whose nature is the *mauna* that is devoid of the jumping ego-mind'.

My Lord destroyed my delusion

762 I experience the supreme bliss of my Guru who became my Lord by destroying the false delusion, this world that is a crowded assemblage of mental concepts. There is therefore no scope in my heart to have thoughts about anything other than dwelling upon the delightful greatness of the feet of grace of my Lord, the generous one who bestowed his grace on me.

763 Concepts, perceptions arising in delusion, will not end except for those who have known and become the Self, grace-supreme. By destroying misery-generating delusion, my Lord revealed himself to be the non-dual One in my heart, ensuring there was no second entity alongside him.

764 Through the upsurge of devotion towards my Lord who stood before us as the seed of liberation, I was freed from the delusion caused by attachments. When clarity of mind matured into the shining of grace that is *Sivam*-consciousness, the supreme bliss of liberation gripped me.

765 He, my Lord, the only-existing *Sivam*, the substratum of everything from earth to sky, never suffers annihilation, even if the earth and the sky are destroyed. The mind whose form is delusion completely perished through the experience in which I shine merely as pure consciousness, the form of grace, with my ego 'I' destroyed in his feet.

My Lord took away my desire for sensory enjoyments

766 My mind was preoccupied with paying attention to the

world of the senses. Through his glance of grace my Lord penetrated my heart and destroyed the darkness of *anava* [the ego], ensuring that my mind abandoned despicable sense objects and remained turned towards the heart. He now lives in my ignorance-free heart, firmly established there, taking it as his dwelling place.

767 My Lord, having completely destroyed the tendency of the mischievous mind to look at objects, shone as the undivided vast expanse of grace. I do not now see either 'here' or 'hereafter' distinct from my Lord, the light of consciousness who became my master by showing through experience that Self itself is *Brahman*.

768 Because the experience in which that-which-is is realised as 'I' flourishes with great clarity in the heart, my life became the pure consciousness bereft of the delusion comprising the world of the senses which confounds one into believing that it [the world] really exists.

769 There is no harm in living in the world so long as the world does not live within you.

My Lord ended my ignorance

770 If I declare that I possess an intimate connection with true *jnana*, the statement may not be trustworthy. But I speak only the truth: Ramana, the noble one, dispelled the darkness of ignorance, the fierce bondage, and bestowed on me the light of true *jnana*.

771 To enable me to accumulate the extremely clear experience of *Sivam*, my Lord destroyed my ignorance. He now wells up within my heart as the oneness of transcendent being. The entire world was permeated by the flood of his supreme compassion.

772 I witnessed the binding darkness of ignorance leave me

through the look of the Lord, the supreme one who performs his dance of grace, taking the heart as his stage. The silent *turiya*, within which shines the non-dual consciousness that is the supreme, seized me as my very existence. Now there is absolutely no cause for self-pity.

My Lord ended my *pramada* [forgetting or being unaware of the Self]

773 As the light of Guru-Ramana consciousness suffused my heart, ensuring the total cessation of the death that comes through *pramada*, a life of grace, divine silence, free from *pramada*, arose for me, and I settled impeccably into the state of immortality.

774 Because my mind has assumed the form of the Self, I do not contemplate the Self through thinking and forgetting. My mind rejoices in the unsurpassed state whose nature is bliss and which exists without the thoughts that delight over joys or suffer through sorrows.

775 Is the greatness of the grace of the one who owns me of such a nature that it can be described? I realised clearly through experience the excellence of this truth: forgetfulness of the Self, which I appeared to have experienced at some point, had never ever approached me.

776 Forgetting and remembering made me die and be reborn. Then the mind, unceasingly bewildered through thinking and forgetting, died. The 'I' whose form is the ego, which whirled around in the births and deaths that are merely thinking and forgetting, also died. A life of abiding in *Atma-swarupa*, the innate-to-all supreme, flourished for my soul.

777 I, his slave, died in each and every moment I forgot my owner. He, the trusted one, merged with me in the heart as the uninterrupted knowledge of my true nature, putting an end to that death whose form is forgetfulness.

My Lord ended my births

778 While still living in the body, he, the embodiment of truth, died in the heart and lived a worthy, wondrous life. He destroyed my ego-pride that arose as an effect caused by deluding ignorance, bringing to an end my births.

779 Through the being-consciousness that has nothing opposed to it, I lived freed from the disease of birth, the affliction caused by ignorance. Union with *Sivam* [Siva *yogam*] is merely the *Atma-swarupa* that exists all the time and which is one's real nature. It is clear that *viyoga* [separation] is merely forgetting one's real nature.

780 Lord, *swarupa* that shines brilliantly in the heart as the deathless reality! Did I at any time exist as a different entity distinct from you? I experienced the affliction of birth as though I were different from you. What a dream!

My Lord freed me from being the doer

781 Since my heart has become full of the grace of my Lord, it will not be possible in future for me to do anything. I rejoice continuously, simply remaining immersed in the clear sea of the experience of the supreme *Sivam* that possesses surpassing glory.

782 Having become harmonised with my *jnana*-Guru's grace, I now perform actions prompted by its power. Because I do not have *kartrutva*, the feeling that I am doing something, I do not get bound in any way by engaging in activities.

783 Because my mind has subsided and become wholly the Self in the difference-free experience of *jnana* that was bestowed by my Lord, the *jnani* who had witnessed the destruction of his own mind, I have been totally freed from the differentiating knowledge that involves 'I' and 'this'. It

is not therefore possible for me to be the performer of any actions.

784 Because the light of my Lord's feet of grace has seized me, I have been freed from the compulsion to perform karma [activities]. I now remain firmly in *mauna*, the natural *tapas* of abidance in my own true nature that shines as the supreme Siva-dharma.

785 Because my nature is *mauna*, pure consciousness, that dignified, unsullied grace to which merit and demerit do not attach themselves, I will never at any time be caught in and bound by the actions of merit and demerit that I appear to have performed in the sight of others.

My Lord removed *kartavya* and desires

Kartavya is the feeling that there are activities that need to be done. If one identifies with the body and the mind, one is always planning ahead, making choices about what one should do next. The *jnani* never feels 'I must do this' or 'This needs to be done'. There is the knowledge that the Self that animates the body will make it perform all the things that need to be done. In a more general sense there is also the knowledge that everything in the world is a manifestation of the divine, and that nothing personally needs to be done to change the unfolding of scripted events.

786 After I attained the Lord of my soul, through him I experienced a tranquillity which transformed the very nature of my mind into that of the immaculate supreme. What now remains for me to gain?

787 What is it that I can do? What is it that I am duty-bound to do? I am no longer aware of the 'me' that says 'I'. That 'I' became tasty food for my Lord who stood before us, generating in such abundance the light of *mauna* that it reached the heavens.

788 My Lord bestowed on me pure consciousness, the reality. Since the experience of *Atma-swarupa* shines as pure consciousness, is not the life of the five senses comprising forms and attributes false? Therefore, other than getting focused in *swarupa*, what remains to be done by me?

789 Because of the blossoming of the state of oneness that possesses the unique non-dual beauty whose nature is impossible to think about, I do not see any *sadhana* that has to be performed. Nor do I see anything that I have to attain by performing it.

790 The experience of *Sivam*, existing in the heart, surges and swells as the ultimate wealth. Since the fullness of grace has spread out everywhere, leaving not even an unfilled space the size of the point of a needle, I have no enthusiasm for attaining anything at all, nor do I have any craving in my heart.

791 Through the power of the firm knowledge of reality that surged forth, causing the delusion of the sense of duty to cease completely, I was freed from the oppressing and powerful chain of desire. I merged in the auspicious life of grace, a life that is free of desires.

792 I remain captivated by my Lord who kindles in my heart the experience of *Sivam* that has arisen there, making it surge more and more. Therefore, other than thinking of my Lord and praising him incessantly, there are no actions for me to perform with the intention of attaining anything.

793 I remain prosperously in the state of grace, savouring the pure bliss of *Sivam* without suffering any afflictions, which are the profitless activities of the mind. I accomplished this by having the true knowledge that nothing remains as this person's responsibility, and that everything is the responsibility of him who is the supreme.

Love, Devotion and Surrender

The nature of true love

794 The experience in which one has merged in love, with the feeling of duality dead, is alone the state of bliss. The ego-mind causes the feeling of duality. If one first completely destroys it in the auspicious *Sivam*, which is nothing but love, and thereby brings about the eradication of thoughts, there will be no shortage of bliss.

795 Only the authentic love that is born of pure consciousness will help one to attain the supreme bliss, the intimate existence with *swarupa*. Love born of attachments that arise in the deluded mind and which associates with forms and attributes will accumulate nothing but unlimited sorrow for the *jiva*.

796 Only if the mind, the sorrow-generating deception, is destroyed, will the supreme bliss that is wholly love well up in the heart. Those who have completely lost that binding delusion will shine in the undying state, attaining the endless experience of their real nature.

797 The beauty of those who have attained the life of grace expresses itself as love for all beings, free of the enmity that arises from ignorance.

My Lord revealed my nature to be love and bliss

798 The Lord, grace supreme, regarded me with kindness,

enabling me to come completely under his spell as love itself and abide there, resting on him. [For me] the world's nature now exists as nothing but *Sivam*, love. Unlike in the past I will no longer be afraid of the world.

799 The life of supreme grace, the never-ending state I attained through my Lord, is not to be attained by everyone. Only those who are fortunate to possess and practise love for divine grace will reach the world of supreme bliss within the feet of the Lord.

Lover and Beloved

There is a poetic tradition known as 'Bridal mysticism' in which the soul's search for union with the divine is depicted metaphorically as a young girl pining for her lover. Occasionally the union is consummated, with marriage symbolising liberation. This is an old tradition in Tamil poetry with poems of this genre going back to the Sangam era two thousand years ago. Ramana Maharshi himself evoked this poetic style by composing some of the verses of *Aksharamanamalai* (*The Marital Garland of Letters*) in this format. Muruganar wrote some of his own poetry in this style. In fact, much of volume two and a few verses in volume three of *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* adopt this stylistic technique to depict the union of the young lover (Muruganar) with his beloved (Sri Ramana).

800 When we were living together as husband and wife in rapturous exultation, doing whatever we wished, he became non-dually one with me and I ceased to see either 'him' or 'me' as distinct.

801 My Lord united with me in a way that my virginity, the ego, was totally destroyed. Now that he shines all-pervasively as the only-existing, undivided *Atma-swarupa*, in what place can I rise as a distinct 'I', separating from my Lord's feet of grace?

802 Feeling concerned that it was difficult for me, a tender natured lady, to bite and chew sugarcane, he merged with me as sugarcane juice itself. My Lord, the rare supreme, has so much true love towards me, the devoted maidservant. My Lord's very form is grace.

803 I was a very simple-minded woman, not one possessing a powerful intellect. I was pining away, thinking, 'How will I attain the transcendental *Sivam*, my Lord's real nature?' I remained still without any effort, which is the rising of the ego-consciousness. My Lord's compassion was such that he shone spontaneously as 'I-I' within my heart as my own nature.

804 He is neither male, female nor neuter. He is the sole and solitary Self, my own real form whose nature is the *jnana* that dwells indestructibly in the heart. When he, my husband, abides as the eye of *jnana* itself, how can his real nature be seen as an object with the eye?

805 Through the wondrous nature of his grace my Lord embraced me, ruining and destroying the power of delusion. Not only did the fact of separation from him vanish for good as an illusion, so too did the [idea of a] loving union that arises in a clear mind.

806 At the feet of my supreme Lord of grace, whose nature is unbounded *mauna*, I, the devoted maidservant attained union with *jnana*. The bliss of the experience of *Brahman*, free from the difference of man and woman, welled up in abundance in my heart.

807 My Lord remains forever united with me, becoming a fountain of bliss in my heart. As his embrace is so tight even air cannot pass between us, how can I have a lovers' quarrel with him? How can I weaken in body and wither in mind? How can I suffer? How can I unite with him again?

808 My ignorant child, your husband shines as the subtle light of consciousness in the hearts of those who see him within themselves, but without realising his true nature, you regarded him as an earthly human being. Dive within and experience him shining as the one who rules the pure expanse of grace.[64]

809 I walked in the desert, closely following the wielder of grace who came to me and became my Lord. Through his grace I found the tormenting heat of the scorching desert to be cool, like the shade of a dense growth of canopied *karpaga* trees.[65]

810 Though I was not accustomed to walking, he took me with him. After making me walk a very long distance, he told me that we had come close to his town. Because I was going with my Lord who protects with his grace, I was totally unaware of the walking and only had a feeling of lying on a mattress of bliss that was swelling in my heart throughout the walk. Hence I said, 'Indeed we are already there'.

811 He is neither an earthly human being, nor is he a god of the heavens. He is neither male nor female nor androgyne. He is not even the Iswara who is associated with the power of imagination [*kalpana sakti*] responsible for the five functions. He with whom I merged as my husband is truly *Brahman*.

Experiencing love as *Sivam*

812 I attained the experience in which the eminent state of

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[64] Muruganar's title for this verse is: 'Mother to heroine, describing the hero's greatness.'

[65] The next verse, entitled by Muruganar, 'Heroine answering her lady companion who questioned her about her desert walk,' completes the story. Muruganar's note to the following verse says: 'The import is that through his wondrous grace he took me along without my being aware of the walking.' The implication is that Muruganar is saying that Bhagavan made his *sadhana* so easy, he barely noticed he was doing it.

swarupa, existing as the land of bliss, surged as a feeling of true love. Realising clearly through this experience the truth that love itself is *Sivam*, I experienced in *Sivam* the true love that is nothing but *Sivam*.

813 With everything shining as a mere appearance in *Sivam*, my mind merged completely into that *Sivam* as love. As a consequence, everything became, in a harmonious way, the form of supreme bliss. I merged with the state of *mauna*, the state of perfect well-being.

814 That which deserves to be attained is only love for the Lord, and through my Lord's grace I was blessed with that love. Because that love, free of obstacles, shines as *Sivam*, I now uninterruptedly contemplate my Lord, who is nothing but bliss.

815 To prevent this cur from being ruined by getting caught in the evil-generating [personal] love, Guru Ramana easily kindled the fire of *tapas* in my heart, enabling me to flourish through love for *Sivam*. As a result, the light of *jnana* now shines forth constantly in my heart.

816 The precious *jiva* that has dissolved itself completely in love exists only as supreme bliss. The glorious quality of the Siva religion is the realisation that love itself is the very nature of *Sivam*, the divine grace that is consciousness-the-supreme.

Love and devotion towards Lord Siva

817 The ego is destroyed through the powerful rising of Siva-yoga [union with *Sivam*][66] that one secures in full measure in the heart through worshipping Siva with loving devotion.

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[66] There is a school of yoga called 'Siva yoga' that follows many traditional yogic practices. Muruganar is not referring to this sect. He is using the words in a more general sense to indicate any practice that culminates in the individual uniting with *Sivam* and disappearing into it.

The *swarupa*, being-consciousness, shining illustriously as calmness in the heart, is the defect-free silent supreme *Brahman*.

818 Those who desire to be redeemed should zealously perform the *sadhana* of Siva-yoga in the heart. They should perform it daily, without slackening and with overflowing joy, relying primarily on the Lord's grace.

819 Those perfected in Siva-yoga have attained as their nature non-dual devotion to being, ensuring the total destruction of the noose of desires that arises through the 'I am the body' conviction. With the exception of these Siva yogis, everyone else will be unable to avoid worshipping the Lord through their mind, speech and body in order to destroy their ignorance.

820 Siva is clearly present in the hands of true devotees who put their palms together in reverence, in the thoughts of those who have taken refuge in the heart, in the tongues of those who proclaim his surpassing glory, and in the heads of those who bow to him.

Experiencing the real nature of Lord Siva

821 The imaginings of the ego-mind, the veiling delusion, perplexed me and made me believe my Lord to be one of the three prime entities [*jiva*, Iswara and *jagat*].[67] Through the vision of experiential *jnana* bestowed by him, the bewilderment that arises through seeing imaginary differences ceased, leaving Siva standing alone as consciousness-the-supreme, unattached to anything and transcending these three entities.

822 Lord Siva, embracing me wholly as love, became nothing

[67] The individual, God and the world.

but the silence of supreme bliss in my heart. True bliss and love comprise a set in which one never separates from the other.

823 Perfect Siva [Siva-*purna*], who overflows as fresh ambrosia, will perform the divine dance only in a mind that has merged with the space of consciousness [*chit-ambara*]. However, he does not move. He is the seed-like cause for everything, but if one realises the truth, this argument of cause and effect will be seen as only a concept.

824 In order to make me perform at all times with absolutely nothing else to do other than practise devotion to the grace that brought me under its spell, Lord Siva joined my mind to the path of *jnana* that leads to liberation, and by doing so he made me obtain the perfect realisation of his *swarupa*.

True devotees and true devotion

825 Only those perfected beings who are free from likes and dislikes are true devotees of God.

826 If the mind becomes extremely mature through devotion, then the harvest of true *jnana*, the real accomplishment, will be easily obtained. What will merge in the heart will be the light of the expanse of *swarupa*, consciousness-the-supreme, the eternally attained grace that is full of *mauna*.

827 The devotees of our Lord, the liberal bestower of blissful grace, will not wilt and droop through the disease of mental affliction. Keeping his full attention on them, the Guru will protect those who dwell upon him, having taken up the path of love.

828 The biographies of the divine devotees who have merged with the Self will taste sweet the more one dwells on them. They will dispel and destroy mental anxieties. They will dam

up pure consciousness, the unsurpassed true bliss in the heart, making it become clear.

829 Merely by mentally dwelling on those who possess the wealth of Siva-*jnana tapas* – whose company must be obtained – deadly sins will be destroyed.

830 Know that I am a servant not only of my Lord but also of the devotees who have come under his Lordship. Is it not by becoming the devotee of devotees on this earth that the Lord has his feet, which possess the wealth of grace, abiding as treasure in the hearts of all?

Desire for God

831 If the desire for God becomes tightly held, attachment towards other things will loosen.

832 As the attachment to other things [non-Self] declines more and more, the feeling of devotion will gain strength.

833 In seeking God alone, all my faculties have surrendered to him. Since they have taken refuge in divine grace, I can clearly see that in all their activities they possess the auspicious seal of the divine.

834 The light that is the knowledge of the transcendental state that dispels the shackling attachment, the ignoble mind, will shine through the grace of Iswara only when the Siva *bhakti* that surges naturally towards the feet of Iswara arises in the heart.

835 If those who want to be in Iswara's thoughts think of him, he will also think of them.

Meditating on the life of our Lord

836 The devotees who have come to possess a longing for grace

realise that, when they dwell upon the life of our Lord with an upsurge of love, the delusion of their mind is dispelled. The life of our Lord is therefore itself a precious grace-instruction that possesses the quality of the divine, the God of silence who cannot be seen.

837 The more one dwells upon the deeds of grace of our Lord, the more the heart will soften, and the love that has gripped one will wax more and more as a flood in the heart. Filling the heart completely, the upwelling of this love will itself, like the cooling rays of a full moon, eliminate the scorching torments of the mind.

838 Master the mind-transcending science of grace so that your bewildering delusion is destroyed. If you have any desire to read literature, then learn with love and devotion the life history of Bhagavan, the embodiment of grace, regarding it as the foremost among the excellent texts of true *jnana*, grace.

Narrating the glory of the Lord

839 The narration of the glory of those who have renounced the ego possesses the excellence of being the holy water [*tirtha*] that will purify the mind.

840 For me, seeking is only for the true *jnana swarupa*. For me, singing is only of your glory, heavily laden with grace. For me, quarrelling is only with the filthy sense objects of the world. For me, what is abandoned is merely the delusion of worldly desires.

841 Our father, who became my inseparable Lord of bliss, you reigned over me with an abundance of kindness, looking upon me as someone who was entitled to your true love. What can I say? What recompense can I offer? And by what means? I sing your glory constantly, dwell on it, and abide wholly as you.

God bears all burdens

842 [If all burdens] are made to be God's responsibility, then he himself will carry all the burdens.

843 Residing in the heart, the all-powerful God bears all the burdens himself. My Lord revealed to me that having a knowledge of this truth as it really is in the heart is the means to attain the life of *Sivam*-enjoyment that is full of peace immeasurable by the mind. This is how he brought me under his rule.

844 The grace-nature of the totally impartial power of *Sivam* remains merged majestically with everything, becoming everything. Only for those who have realised that the grace-nature of this power bears everything as its burden will the affliction arising through delusion end.

845 One should leave everything to God, making it his burden. One should not have any thought other than the thought of God. One should realise all acts to be the acts of God. The wise ones say that this perspective alone is Siva-*jnana*.

846 Strength of mind is merely the courageous conviction that the Supreme One exists to bear the burden [of the whole world].

Surrender to God

847 We have not seen anyone mighty enough to straighten and remove the crookedness of a dog's tail. Similarly there is none here powerful enough to reform and recast this pitiable and wretched world. Hence those *sadhakas* who have earnestly taken up the effort to redeem themselves from the shackles of 'I' and 'mine' should regard themselves as [too] weak for that task [of reforming the world] and offer themselves wholly and solely to the benevolent Lord.

848 If the mind is made an offering to God, its mischief will cease and it will die.

849 The protection for the *jiva* is the dharma of surrender performed towards the Lord.

850 May the devotees walk along the path whose conduct is always remaining in harmony with the will of the Lord. Those who have surrendered themselves to the Lord will not rise periodically as obstructions that get in the [Lord's] way.

851 Unless one conducts oneself in harmony with the divine will of the Lord, it will be impossible to attain peace in the heart.

852 Only those who have witnessed themselves becoming prey to God will have the experience of God realisation.

Prostrating to the Lord

853 The great ones regard as true prostration only abidance in harmonious union [with the Self].

854 Not everyone who prostrates has united harmoniously with my Lord. Those who have united harmoniously with him are alone the ones who have truly prostrated. When my husband exercised his dominion over me by uniting with me in holy wedlock, my harmonious union with him, attained through love, became the appropriate prostration for me.

Becoming a prey to my Lord

855 You who are the expanse of grace, the *swarupa* who merged with me as my eye! You consumed me as your prey and finished me off definitively, making that thought, the thought that I will swallow you, the last thought that arose in me.

856 At one time I remained deluded, drowning in concepts.

The absolute being that is divine silence reared its head through the experience that thrived when I became a prey to consciousness-the-supreme, immaculate grace. I now live in the fullness of *Sivam* that surges as the magnificent supreme reality [*bhuma*].

857 After I lost my form and ceased to exist by becoming a prey to the Lord whose real form is only the holy feet, the phrase 'I am the slave of your feet' became incongruous. His feet themselves became the pure non-dual Self.

Being consumed by the Lord

858 By abiding in the service of the Lord's feet, the ego becomes food for them, and true *jnana* shines. Those who shine with true *jnana* will live as the very embodiment of humility. Their hearts will prosper, having as their nature a wealth of unceasing supreme bliss.

859 If the ego, the 'I am the body' limitation, becomes food for the Lord's feet of grace that are the effulgent mass of *jnana*, the *jiva* will excel and shine as the expanse of consciousness-the-supreme, the grace-filled silence, with the *chid-jada* knot of delusion, the mind, severed.

860 When I became the rising 'I', I struggled hard and suffered in vain to see my Lord, the supreme of supremes who exists as the ancient primal entity. Ultimately, unable to see him, I died and became his food, but at the very moment of my death, as I became food for the perfect primal one, he stood harmoniously as my own directly-perceived *swarupa*.

Service and Worship

Serving my Lord

861 The unique king of grace sits majestically enthroned in my heart, ensuring that I never feel I lack something. The 'I', rising in opposition to him, then enquired, 'What is the personal service I can render to you?' To which he replied, 'Subside within the Self, pure consciousness, without manifesting [as that 'I'].'

862 My Lord ordered me, 'Just be, without doing anything'. Having done this, my sole job became the performance of the grace-eliciting true service in which my consciousness firmly rooted itself and clung to that supreme state in which I could not see an alien god to bow to in obeisance.

The fruits of my service

863 My Lord, by establishing me in the heart as someone who was possessed by madness for your true nature, you ensured that no other worldly madness possessed me. Because the treacherous ego-ghost perished, losing its continuing existence, all of my actions became an appropriate service to the divine.

864 I do not now render any service to the divine as I used to in the past. Like a *jnani*, I dress up, eat and move about doing nothing. Only my Lord, the non-dual supreme one, could be aware of what my state might be, possessed as it is of divine pride.

865 I live in this world with divine exultation because I became enslaved to my Lord and rendered divine service to his feet. From now on, whichever world I may happen to end up in, I will live in the same way, having as my nature the wealth of bliss that is saturated with the perfect light of consciousness.

How to serve

866 My Lord, whom I perceived as the ambrosia filling my eyes, became replete within me as the ambrosia of rare deliciousness that I consumed and delighted in. He, the extremely pure *swarupa* from whom it is impossible to separate, cannot be attained by even the celestials but only by his true servants.

867 When one looks into the matter, all that is needed to perform grace-eliciting service to the Guru-Lord who has brought us under his rule is extremely pure devotion in which the mind one-pointedly rejoices in love for that Lord. Nothing else.

868 The sole and entire duty for devotees is to live their lives performing service to the Lord who has accepted, as his grace-endowed responsibility, the burden of bearing the devotees' welfare. All the other duties only exist for those other people who are not devotees.

869 In the ego-mind that says 'I' there grows a false darkness, a feeling 'I am performing actions' while actions are performed. If it dies, all the actions that one undertakes become *tapas*. The rule for the discerning path of being is to conduct one's life as an offering to the divine in one's heart.

870 Siva-yoga is sinking into the heart through the practice of enquiry into the feet that are in the heart. Only those true devotees who worship through a consciousness that has merged with *Sivam* are the virtuous devotees who render

personal service to the Lord. Even the celestials long to serve the feet of such devotees.

871 Heart of mine, I will offer you some beneficial advice. If an irrepressible urge in a heart that has sunk fully and firmly in the Lord arises, acting on that urge becomes service to God. However, desist from performing any action as your own since this will only be the mischievous movement of *jiva-bodha* [individual consciousness].

How can I now perform *puja*?

872 Because [the state of] abiding bereft of the ego shines faultlessly in my heart as the excellent Siva *puja*, I perform in this vast world the Siva *puja* of worshipping *swarupa* by remaining still, in silence.

873 Since my mind now remains merged with the light of pure consciousness, my Lord has bestowed on me a life of distinction in which everything I do has become a supreme *puja*. How can I now perform *puja* to his red, golden feet, a *puja* that would earn me the merit of his grace, since I would need to possess a mind to worship in this restricted way.

874 As my Lord has accepted all my thoughts, words and deeds as a divine service rendered exclusively to him, I do not perform *puja* to the beautiful feet which possess the wealth of grace through rituals whose rules have been laid down, and which many other people adhere to.

875 Who am I to perform *puja* to the grace that is consciousness-the-supreme, that which is everything as it shines within me, the worshipper, as my true nature, as I-I, and as love in my heart?

True and false worship

876 Until one enquires and knows one's truth, the world and

everything else that veils the supreme *swarupa* through name and form will appear to be real. One should therefore obtain the Lord's grace, *jnana*, by diving into the heart through worship performed with an inwardly focused and subtle consciousness. Only when the Lord's grace is attained will the danger whose nature is *pramada* [Self-forgetfulness] come to an end.

877 For *sadhakas* attempting to attain *jnana* the virtuous practice of abiding in being [*sat-achara*] is superior to the practice of following religious observances.

878 The supreme exists as one's own nature in the heart. The degraded ego, the deceptive mind that is full of delusion, imagines it [the supreme] to be different from oneself and performs innumerable types of *pujas* to it. If one ponders over the matter, these *pujas* are just the play of little children.

879 The supreme *Sivam* shines as the expanse, the flood of grace-silence, the being-consciousness that is free of thinking and forgetting. *Jnanis* say that worshipping it through the flurry of the jumping ego that has split it into two amounts to disregarding and ridiculing it.

880 I have experienced my real nature, the non-dual Self that is the experience of abiding in the *Sadasivam* which remains merged in my heart as my own nature. Because of this, I do not engage in thoughts associated with performing any *upasana* [worship]. If I did think in this way, it would amount to suicide by cutting my Self into two.

881 The light of the grace-silence, the feet of the Lord whose form is the powerful pure consciousness, will only desire and reach the pure and upright minds that trust them. It will reject and leave as an unsustainable relationship the falsity-filled minds of the deceitful ones who engage in useless, ostentatious worship.

Avoid the worship of lesser gods

882 The many gods arise and subside in you. I once took you to be a few of those gods. The mental suffering arising from this past mistake of mine was due to my error of not knowing my Self, the substratum.

883 Imagining multiple different forms in you who are the one true unique God, I fell into a discordant state. Through the connection with the mind that creates the deception of contradictory differences this servant fell into ignorance and committed this error.

884 Without getting angry with me, listen attentively. Do not cherish any lesser deities to fulfil your needs. If you worship the *swarupa* that remains as the soul of the soul, it has the power to bestow the excellence of true knowledge.

885 Do not get perturbed by thinking, with a lack of certainty, that he [Bhagavan] might be this god, that god, or some other god. He is actually the reality, the light that shines as this god, that god and all other gods.

886 One may worship this god, that god, or any other god, regarding it as the supreme. When one enquires into consciousness and knows it, all those shining gods will in truth be the *chit-swarupa* [consciousness-nature] of the sole one, Siva-Ramana.

How do I worship?

887 My Lord bestowed his compassion by tying my mind to his feet, ensuring that the straying mind's chaotic nature and excitement came to an end. Through the worship done with true devotion, which took the form of the consciousness experienced in *nishtha*, which I practised with relish, I attained the state of *Brahman*.

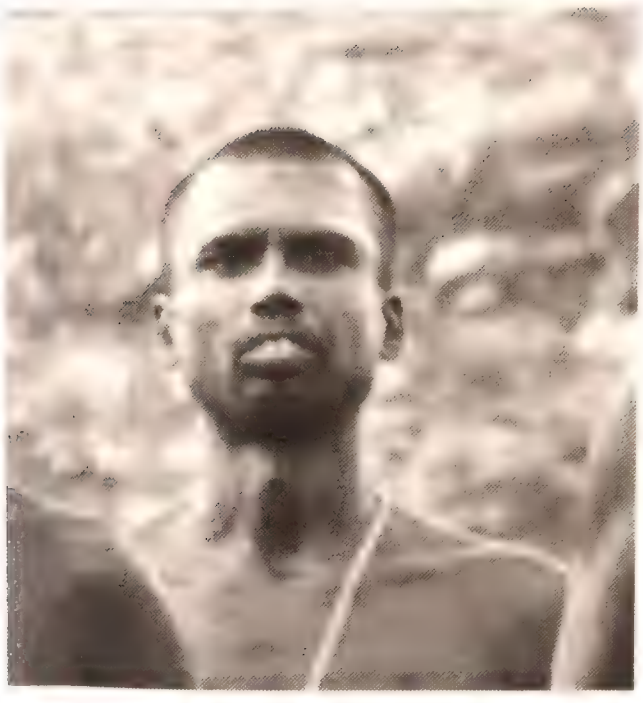
888 Shining as being-consciousness in the heart the *Sadguru*

enables the arising of the utterly magnificent Self-experience. Since the 'I' has now died, I will worship him in his real nature by being aware of him constantly in the state of peace that is the never-failing life.

889 Having destroyed the ego-ghost, the limitation, my *Sadguru* shines and prospers within my intuitive understanding. Perfectly experiencing the *mauna*-worship that keeps me absorbed in his feet, I am now incapable of performing other forms of worship that involve thought.

890 Exalted one! Lord who ruled over this slave! Your nature, wholly non-dual consciousness, glows in the heart as the expanse of unalloyed grace. Since that extremely perfect fullness is shining bereft of the thinker, thinking of your nature is really odd.

891 The heart, through the unique non-dual Self-knowledge, shines, freed from the delusion of the false world that is just a mirage. In such a heart there is absolutely no opportunity for a prayer to be offered through a mind impelled by a desire.



Muruganar, taken in the late 1920s.

The Reality of the World

Sri Ramana taught that if a world is perceived by a perceiver, that world is a creation of the one who is seeing it. He said that in these circumstances the light of the Self acts on the *vasanas*, the desires that reside in the heart, causing a self-projected world to appear in front of a person who sees it. The names and forms that are seen are a mental construct, an extended thought, and they have no more reality than the witness inside the body who sees them.

When the individual 'I' dies in the Self, this projection process ends. The world is then known and experienced to be an indivisible appearance in one's own Self. It is no longer registered as a phenomenon that is separate from the one who views it.

The mind appears to function through what Hindu philosophy calls 'the *triputis*'. These are the connected processes of knower, knowing and known, and seer, seeing and seen. In the unenlightened, ideas of what is real are processed through the mental and sensory processes of the *triputis*. Sri Ramana maintained that the apparent dichotomy of seer-and-seen, and knower-and-known, have no fundamental reality, and that when the Self is realised these distinctions are no longer operational. Knowing and seeing remain, but there is no longer any sense that there is an internally located individual who knows and sees things that are different and separate from himself.

In the everyday world reality is ascribed to things that are tangible. A rock is real because it can be touched or perceived in other ways. Sri Ramana (along with other *advaita* teachers) did not accept that this common-sense yardstick was a valid way of

determining what is truly real. The following declaration sums up his position:

> What is the standard of reality? That alone is real which exists by itself, which reveals itself by itself, and which is eternal and unchanging.[68]

Neither perceived objects nor the perceiver of them are regarded as being real under this definition. In fact, the only thing that qualifies is the Self. Things that appear and disappear (world phenomena) and which need a mediating witness to see them are not regarded as real since they lack permanence, and they do not reveal themselves without an agent who registers them.

The perceived world is just a concept of the mind

892 For those who have known the state of pure consciousness and who are abundantly rejoicing in it, everything that is perceived is just a concept.

893 Those who enquire into their Self-nature will attain *jnana*. Those who, abandoning their Self-nature, enquire into the non-Self will be ruined by the ego. All things in the non-Self, including the one who sees it, are only concepts, like ornaments of gold.

894 The world [comprising the *triputis*] is a picture appearing on the screen of *swarupa*, the light of pure consciousness.

895 The world appears to possess a solid form, but only the imagination of the deceitful and deluding mind that protects and sustains it has the capacity of preventing it from becoming food for the expanse of consciousness-the-supreme, the expanse of grace. Not even the extremely powerful gods can accomplish this [i.e. prevent it from becoming food].

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[68] *Maharshi's Gospel*, p. 61.

896 To regard manifestation, comprised wholly of the fragmentary mind, as the real life, and then to embrace and remain sunk in it is an error caused by deluded understanding. Realise that such a life is ruinous and detach yourself from it. By realising the truth through *jnana-vichara* [self-enquiry], merge in union with the life of *Sivam* enjoyment, your essential nature.

897 If the mind becomes cool, the whole world becomes cool. Hence, the entire world does not exist apart from the mind.

My Lord freed me from the *triputis*

898 Through the *jnana* experience I faultlessly realised that the space of consciousness is itself *Sivam*, the reality. The strength of this experience expelled [the perception of] differences, making my heart see only the unchanging, difference-free reality even in the mutating and conflicting *triputis*.

899 My Lord shattered and threw away the door that is my mind, causing the *triputi*-knowledge, a world view perceived by the deluded mind, to become just a concocted fiction. Who can measure and describe the great might of his *mauna*, that consciousness-the-supreme which cut asunder the *chit-jada* knot,[69] transforming my consciousness into the object-free expanse?

900 Because the supreme *Sivam*, the Self, having swallowed completely the *triputis* and transformed them wholly into itself, remains firmly rooted in my heart as the expanse of divine grace that is consciousness-the-supreme, I realised clearly as a direct experience that the *triputis* which manifest are mere appearances in the Self.

901 With a mind that had become subtle I subsided in the

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[69] The *chit-jada* knot is the unreal bond that makes consciousness associate with and identify with the form of the body.

state that shines in an extremely subtle way. The *triputis*, perceptible only to the gross mind, vanished and the Self, my real nature, shone forth, blossoming as the undivided non-dual firmament.

Seer, seeing and seen

902 He who sees things is not the Self while he has this nature of seeing objects, but if the seer is itself the Self, no seeing [of objects] takes place. The three entities of seer, seeing and seen, which are all entities that are witnessed, are a skilful conjuring trick staged by consciousness-the-supreme, the grace that is divine silence, which remains as their maternal source.

903 Until true *jnana*, the vision of the real nature of the seer, arises in an excellent fashion in the heart, it is a profitless sin to go on insisting that the world, which is not seen in the absence of the seer, the ego-self, is either real or unreal.

904 Do not take 'seeing' as the vision of the mind, which involves differences. Regard [true] seeing as shining. 'Seeing' the supreme *swarupa* is to exist and shine as the eye of grace, *swarupa*. Seeing 'another' is nothing but the illusory activity of the eye of the mind.

905 By remaining firmly settled in the heart in such a way that the objective awareness that desires and experiences the differences involving seer, seen and seeing is weakened, the mind will experience the bliss of consciousness, merging with the Self, with the veiling ego-delusion completely eradicated.

906 When I realised in an utterly clear and convincing way that seeing [*drishti*] itself is creation [*srishti*], I turned my *drishti* backwards, making it merge in the heart. None of the triple torments [*tapatraya*] that arise in creation associate

with me. Peace has merged with me, bringing to an end the mischievous movements of externalised consciousness.

907 The seer does not exist. The seen that is witnessed as objects also does not exist. Seeing alone exists. Keenly enquire and realise.

Maya

Maya, illusion, is the power that makes us believe that what we see in front of our eyes is real. It is also, in some schools of thought, the power that brings creation into existence. It is sometimes regarded as a female divine force who brings into being and then sustains the world drama as a divine play (*leela*) that is so convincing, it persuades all of its audience that it has an inherent reality. When one is established in consciousness, one can see the drama for what it is, but if one lives from the vantage point of the individual person, one automatically becomes convinced that the 'play' is real. Consciousness is the stage on which *maya* creates and stages her drama. Unless one is established in that consciousness, the drama always deludes us and persuades us it is real.

908 The *Atma-swarupa*, the light of the non-dual being-consciousness, exists as the stage for the enactment of the play put on by *maya's* power. The Self, the supreme being and absolute oneness, is therefore the unique, imperishable substratum for all the perishable differences created by concepts.

909 This world which comes to be seen by *jivas*, and which bewilders them, is just the expanded sport of *maya*.

910 Those who have become immersed in the world delusion, the sport of *maya*, will not get immersed in the bliss of true *jnana*.

911 The appearance of the false world is only the play of the power of the consciousness that is the Self. True *jnana*,

the reality, is analogous to amorphous gold. The *triputis* imagined in the Self are wholly consciousness, like golden ornaments [created from gold].

912 Only those who are spectators at a magic show are taken in by it, not the one who performs the conjuring tricks. In the same way, only the *jivas*, imaginary creations in the unexcelled supreme, get deluded by the play of *triputis* that the *jiva* has taken upon himself. The Self, whose nature is pure consciousness and which is the supreme being, never experiences delusion.

913 The unfettered power of consciousness manifests within itself all the conjuring tricks of concepts in a unique dream, but through it I escaped, wriggling free from concepts completely, finding redemption as the solitary *Sivam* in the impartial state of eternal silence.

914 Even the power of imagination [*kalpana-sakti*] is not seen as different from consciousness-the-supreme, the *swarupa* that shines as the true eye. In front of my royal presence, I who am the king of *mauna*, it is a wonderful dance performance, a play enacted by true *jnana*.[70]

My Lord ended *maya*

915 Those who have realised the truth that possesses immutable stability will live without illusion, which is the opposite of truth. If they do not live without the illusion that is the opposite of truth, their knowledge of reality will necessarily be false and deluded.

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[70] When the world is known directly to be an indivisible appearance in consciousness, a drama that merely runs on its screen, it can be taken to be 'real' since it is known and experienced to be not separate from the substratum it is projected on. If, however, it is misperceived to be a collection of names and forms that are perceived by an internal witness, it can no longer be regarded as being real since such a perception is an unreal creation of the mind.

916 In the relative world, through the power of his supremely triumphant *maya*, he appears to be all things, whereas in fact he is none of them. Now, through the extremely clear and firm experience of *mauna-jnana* in the heart, I have known clearly the truth of his wonderful *maya*-skill, and my suffering has left me completely.

917 The birth of the ego-ghost in the cosmic imaginary appearance that is the play of the power of *maya* brought about my death, but when the power of consciousness [*chit-sakti,*] the truth of the supreme compassion who is the divine mother, merged with me, I became resurrected as *Atma-swarupa.*

918 Because I am full of the knowledge of my real nature, I exist as the expanse of divine grace, the silence that is stillness. The entire life of delusion, the mirage that is the sport of *maya*, is merely a collection of shadows that appear within me.

My Lord showed me the truth of manifestation

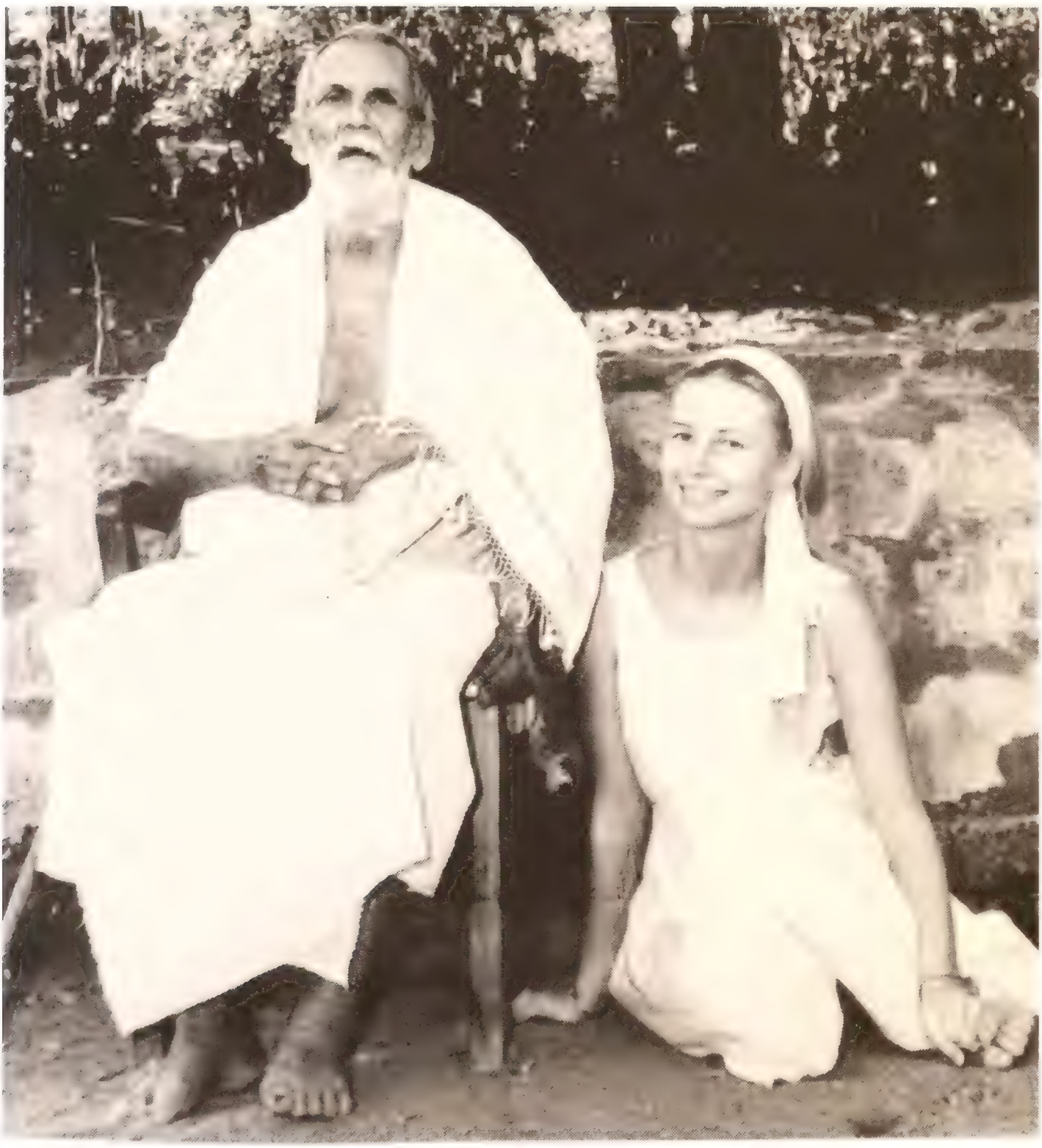
919 When he became my trusted *jnana*-Guru, the light of his feet of grace settled as the expanse of *mauna* in my heart. Now the entire manifest world, comprising differences that shine in the reflected light of the Self, appears merely as shadowy specks.

920 My Lord who possesses the beauty of *swarupa*, pure consciousness, beautifies [and transforms] all that is perceived into the form of the transcendental being. Because I attained his splendrous grace-perspective, saturated with Siva-*jnana*, this world escaped from the stigma, the limited view of being labelled as unreal.

921 Functioning through my ignoble mind, for a long, long time I loved everything I saw. But nowadays I see nothing separate from myself to desire since the feet of my Lord,

the consciousness that is divine grace, fill up my heart completely.

922 God who became my Lord! I, your slave, will not pay attention to anything other than your feet. Everything that appears before me as this world and as the realm of the celestials is merely the manifestation of your mind-*maya* associating with us through deception.



Muruganar and Marlies, a German devotee, taken around 1970.

Aspects of my Lord

The words of my Lord

923 He [Ramana] is the ancient one who shines as the reality in the heart. Through their nature of destroying ignorance, all the written works bestowed by him through grace will bestow liberation on those who recite them, becoming divine mantras.

924 Those with truth-loving ears have rejoiced fully in the words issuing out of our Lord's divine mouth. They [the words] possess the virtuous fragrance of the highest spiritual experience whose nature has transcended thought. Having tasted that ambrosia of rare savour bestowed by our Lord, it is impossible for such people to listen to the words of others.

The teachings of my Lord

925 The true import of the Guru's teachings cannot be experienced except through spiritual practice.

926 For those who possess a powerful intellect, the focus will be the words of the *Vedas* borne by those *devas* on earth, the *brahmins*. But for us, the focus is only the message uttered in silence by Ramana, the Self-manifesting effulgence.

927 The teachings of the Lord who is accomplished in grace, the triumphant *mauna,* are all directed towards being. Through them one remains awake in the Self and shines clearly as

the light of being-consciousness. Each one of them [the teachings] provides a means for living a life that flourishes with the prosperity of peace.

928 Ramana, who is God himself, enabled us to focus our thoughts solely on the undeviating straight path to attaining immaculate *Sivam*. From now on we will walk only on the path of his *jnana*-bestowing instructions that make us reach reality, never pursuing the ways of others.

929 If you ask, 'What is the method by which our Lord, who brought us fully under his rule, brings those who have taken refuge in him to the same state?', it is this: the silence full of the light of *swarupa*-consciousness that flourishes after the forcefully rising ego-limitation has vanished.

The religion of my Lord

930 Our Lord, Ramana Guru, is not an adherent of any religion. His religion is only the pure consciousness that is beyond the reach of mind and speech. Those who have not realised this will claim that he belongs to their own religion.

931 Venkataramana's religion is a religion to which all other religions are acceptable. It is not therefore possible to say of him, 'This is his religion'. He is the just one to whom only the mind-free state is ultimately acceptable. Tell me, what is the colour of the crystal which appears to take on the colour of whatever is placed before it?

932 *Jnanis*, with hearts that are saturated with Self-abidance and which are full of peace, have an attitude of genuine harmony towards all religions, regarding them as being acceptable, without feeling any enmity towards any of them. While remaining as the ruler of the truly impartial state, they regard all religions as good, having [themselves] conquered the delusion of difference.

My Lord, the support of the world

933 You should know that our Lord who has no support himself is the axle-like support for the entire universe.

934 He is my Master who reigned over me, making my being become the unique support that sustains everything else while having no support for itself. As the intense consciousness-the-supreme he is the master of producing a massive harvest with nothing else as seed.[71]

935 The mental strength which is full of the firm faith that has discovered the Lord to be the true anchor is the greatest amongst all the powerful means to conquer difficulties.

The continuing presence of my Lord

936 For us his devotees the Lord appeared in the form of the *Sadguru* so that we could delight by experiencing him through all the five senses. Then, for some reason or another, he withdrew his form, leaving us all here, and became, as in the past, the fullness that is his formless unmanifest *swarupa*.

937 My Lord exercised sovereignty over me with the one word that was the trimming stick that enabled the shining of *swarupa*, the grace-consciousness bound up with innate supreme bliss. When I asked, 'Where have you gone, my Lord?' he said, 'I am here in the heart as the heart'.

938 For the sole purpose of becoming the Lord of us devotees, he appeared in the chariot of the body, the form of grace. Now he has alighted from the chariot and left it. To ensure that we, his devotees, do not languish in fear, he embraced us through love as our very own Self.

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[71] He produces the world out of himself rather from any external material.

939 My Lord withdrew, concealing his manifest form of grace in the undivided *mauna*, the form of unmanifest reality. Now, to enable me to see him in the form of consciousness, his real nature, he exists and shines in my heart as the *Atma-swarupa*, the unmoving reality.

My Lord mirrors his devotees

940 Whatever habits and characteristics a person may have, he [Sri Ramana] too displays the same habits and characteristics when dealing with that person. But though he appears to conform to the external nature of each person, in his true nature as pure being, he really has none of these traits, not even in the smallest amounts.

941 To those who are nice, he is extremely nice; to those who are unpleasant, he appears as a very unpleasant person. He is the ancient one, the *swarupa* that exists as common to all. It is impossible for anyone to describe him, saying, 'This is how he is'.

The *samadhi* shrines of my Lord and his mother

942 The *samadhi* shrine of our Lord, who shone taking a body as his vehicle and moving around in it, is a divine, holy place. It is a temple adored and worshipped reverently by us, his subjects, who have obtained the surpassing state of immortality through his grace.

943 My Lord possesses in abundance a heaven-like grandeur that brought into being a temple for his mother. It was like an emblem demonstrating the power of his *mauna-tapas* that was utterly free of the rising 'I'. Through this temple a unique glory flourished in this world for his mother, the power of grace who gave birth to him.

Venkata, my Lord

The greatness of Venkata

Venkata is a diminutive form of Venkataraman, Sri Ramana's given name. Muruganar uses variations on this name in many of his written works.

944 When Venkata exists as the being-nature of everyone, why is there the practice of strenuously worshipping him? People worship him strenuously because, having not merged and become one with that truth, they suffer.

945 Venkata exists as the precious Self of each and every person. Why is it that his nature is not seen by all? Who will ever see him, the non-dual one, if they are agitated, regarding him as distinct from themselves?

946 Will Venkata, whose greatness is such that even the gods find it difficult to see him, be seen by degenerate people? If the ego definitively departs, he will be eternally realised, not only for the degenerate but for all other beings as well.

947 Do you know what it is like to experience the respected Venkata who is beyond seeing and not seeing? Only for *jnanis* who, seeking desirelessness, remain without thought will it be possible to experience him and fully rejoice in that experience.

948 Can you tell me clearly what it is like to listen to the sound

of the anklets of Venkata[72] who dances motionlessly? Only for those who know it in their heart, having blocked up the holes of the five senses, will it be possible to listen to it and to lie in repose, hearing it continuously.

949 Why does Venkata, who moves about as the excellent embodiment of *jnana*, express the truth through *mauna*? He expresses the truth through *mauna* because it [truth] has the greatness of not being amenable to measurement by the other means of acquiring knowledge, beginning with perception.[73]

950 Will those who follow the path of karma merge in Venkata, the *swarupa* wherein rejoice those who have realised the mysterious source of I? If, coming to have a mind that does not seek the fruits of action, they know the supreme dharma of liberation, they will merge with him.

951 Other than by practising devotion to the feet of Venkata, the supreme Lord, is there any way to overcome the fruits

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[72] This may be an oblique reference to *sphurana*. In *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, verse 1102, Bhagavan speaks of the raised and dancing foot of Nataraja. Sadhu Om, in his commentary on this verse (*Guru Vachaka Kovai*, tr. Sadhu Om, p. 373), equates the raised foot of Nataraja with *sphurana*, the inner radiance of the Self that is experienced as a pulsation of 'I'-ness as the devotee merges with the Self.

In 'Keerthi Tiruvahaval', lines 1 and 2, Muruganar equated the dancing of Nataraja in his Heart with an enquiry into his well-being:

> Through his dance of stillness in the Heart of me, his devotee,
> His sounding anklets enquire about my welfare.

This *Guru Vachaka Kovai* verse (1102) also refers to the raised foot of the dancing Siva being an enquiry into the welfare of devotees.

[73] *Pramanam* in Indian philosophy is a list of six ways that knowledge can be legitimately obtained. The first of the six, *pratyaksha*, means knowledge obtained through direct perception.

of destiny? Because the mind moves forward like a raft in the river [of destiny], it is impossible even for Brahma to overcome the fruits of destiny through the power of the mind.

952 Why, in the past, did a few ignoble people beat up the lofty Venkata, esteemed by all the virtuous? In the past a few ignoble people beat him up in order that all may experience wonder witnessing his compassion to all other beings.[74]

953 Venkatavan[75] does not even utter 'Come' to anyone, yet all are hastily rushing to him. Why? They are all rushing to him, he whose feet have conquered the red lotus, because the ocean of bliss is surging in his presence.

954 Venkata, who dispels the darkness that is most difficult to dispel, has undiminishing benevolence towards his devotees. If he has undiminishing benevolence towards his devotees, why does he oppress them with afflictions? It is only to remove the impurities of their minds.

955 Venkatava, who enlightens all his devotees to the state of the Self, is indeed Lord Siva, who wears the *kondrai* blossoms that smell of honey. If he is Lord Siva who wears the blossoms that smell of honey, why do some regard him as an embodied human being? Because they have not enquired within themselves and known the truth.

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[74] This refers to an incident that took place in 1924. A gang of thieves arrived at Ramanasramam in the middle of the night and demanded money. One of them physically assaulted Sri Ramana on his thigh with a stick. Sri Ramana offered his other leg and said that the would-be robber was welcome to hit that one as well. After the gang had departed, Sri Ramana discouraged any of his followers from following them to exact revenge, saying they were just following their dharma as thieves. Later, punning on a word that means both 'beating' and 'worship', he made a joke saying that they had worshipped him by striking with a stick.

[75] A variation of Sri Ramana's given name.

956 Know that though Venkata appears to be a most elegant human being, he will not get caught in time and space. Why not? Because he has the perspective of not behaving as if he has a bodily form, he has the quality of not getting caught in time and space.

957 Other than to finish the uncompleted *tapas* that he had performed in the past, why does Venkata dwell here on this earth, moving about with bare feet? Venkata dwells here, moving about with bare feet, in order to bestow on this earth the fruit of *tapas* performed by it over many *yugas* [epochs].

958 Water is his drink, his food is obtained by begging, and he wears only a loin cloth. Even so, the great ones regard him as the supreme enjoyer. Why? Because the quantum of enjoyment experienced by all the gods, such as Indra, Vishnu and Brahma, is only a tiny droplet compared to the ocean of bliss that Venkata experiences within himself.

959 Instead of riding a divine vehicle [*vahana*] that appeals to him, Venkata moves about on foot. Why? He moves about on foot because he is the one who bears the entire moving and unmoving manifestation, remaining as their sustainer.

960 Venkata does not display any great [and obvious] prowess but instead remains idle, doing nothing. Even so, he is praised as the one who does everything. How? Because, in the same way that all the moving and unmoving objects become active before the presence of the sun, the entire world engages in its activities through his mere presence.

961 O Lady, how did you, a simpleton who knows nothing, know supreme Venkata and then succeed in garlanding and marrying him, under circumstances known to everyone? Though I have garlanded and married him openly, what is the use? His nature is such that he does not know even his own greatness.

962 Venkata is beyond both being and non-being, yet he is accorded the name 'being'. Why? Because to that divine source, the supreme reality that is the certainty of truth, the name 'non-being' is not even slightly appropriate.

963 Venkata who is beyond both knowledge and ignorance has the designation 'knowledge'. Why? It will be highly improper to term as 'ignorance' that supreme light which shines without anything else for it either to know or to make it known.

964 Venkata, who has transcended both happiness and sorrow, is praised as 'wholly happiness'. Why? Because, devoid of the sense of duality, the poison that generates sorrow, that splendour [known as Venkata] abides as the Self, as nothing but supreme happiness.

Venkata, Supreme of Supremes

965 O Supreme of Supremes! In the absence of uniting non-dually with you, it will not be possible for me, through my own ego-nature, to experience divine silence.

966 O Supreme of Supremes! I swear by your reddish golden feet that what I have attained as a 'reward' for leaving your feet of *jnana* is, for now and henceforth, far too much [suffering].

967 O Supreme of Supremes! My father, now that I have reached the shade of your impartial golden feet, whatever events occur in any of the multiple worlds, how will they matter to me?

968 O Supreme of Supremes! Those who have attained the life of grace and rejoiced in it will not have any interest whatsoever in the life of evil delusion.

969 O Supreme of Supremes! Differences will completely vanish if one becomes free of the madness of regarding oneself,

who is in truth pure consciousness [*chit*], as the reflected consciousness [*chidabhasa*].

970 O Supreme of Supremes, how will those who have no desire for you, who forget you, who abandon and leave you while they are alive, enquire into you when life is about to pass away?

971 O Supreme of Supremes! If, every day, one protects one's mind from the ego defect, oneness will prevail at all times.

972 O Supreme of Supremes, that through which the Self makes itself known to the beloved *jiva* as the lamp of grace is the being-consciousness [I am], the revelation of reality.

973 O Supreme of Supremes! If the mind stops operating either externally or internally, supreme bliss will rise up like a flood.

Bhagavan walking on the hill with Madhava Swami, his attendant.

The Blessings that Flowed from Association with my Lord

The blessings of my Lord

974 In Ramana, the *Brahman*-knower who has the distinctive excellence of being extolled by those who have the enduring power to both punish and bless, we have only seen the full unfolding and shining of his power to bless. We have never seen the power to punish.

975 Unless one's truth shines as pure being it is foolishness to claim that the blessing of grace has been attained. It is childishness to call 'a blessing of grace' the good fortune of feeling elated over attaining what one desires. Authentic grace is only the *mauna* that shines exclusively as the empty expanse.

976 The truth of the blessed grace is only the light of the extremely pure *swarupa* that exists as the expanse of consciousness. It is not that which enables the fulfilment of desires that arise through the ego-disgrace in the illusory dream generated through mental bewilderment.

977 My Lord bestowed a unique blessing on me that caused an upsurge of love towards him. Dwelling constantly on his blessing, I will render service to my Lord in all the many ensuing births. The thought of my Lord seized me like the inescapable grip of a ghost.

978 What I want to obtain is him alone, and not any of the

things he gifts. If I attain the blessing of obtaining 'him', this will amount to securing all possible things.

Union with my Lord

979 None can equal the heights of your greatness, and none can equal the extent of my insignificance. Is not the indescribable union I have with you and that you have with me in the state of pure ultimate truth a marvel to behold?

980 Through the vision that I saw after the removal of the world mask that veils the face of *mauna*, my own true nature, I attained my life's purpose, the enjoyment of the union of becoming wholly being-consciousness-bliss, the wealth of grace.

981 When my Lord merged with my consciousness, I had the experience of intimately merging with him as his *swarupa*. Abiding as the true 'I', that 'I' shone forth, possessing a tranquillity of silence that never separates and leaves me.

982 As he is not alien to me, it is appropriate to describe him as 'I myself'. However, he confounded my understanding by appearing to be different from me. I enquired, 'What is your truth? Tell me.' He replied, 'Before you enquire about me, enquire who you are'.

My Lord severed my attachment to the world

983 He, the deathless one who does not in any way combine with anything else, merged with my heart. Though it associates with all things, my life no longer contains any animosity since it now exists with the power of remaining unattached to everything.

984 My Lord now dwells without limitations in my heart as pure consciousness, having destroyed the concepts of the deluded mind, the pairs of opposites such as prosperity and

adversity, and so on. So let prosperity come, and let adversity come. From now on, I will not sink into them.

985 Realising my bodily relatives to be a shackle I took upon myself through delusion, I rejected them, ending the binding attachment in my mind to other beings. For me, who is there in this world who can be my soul's close relative other than my Lord?

986 Other than attachment to the truth of my own Self that shines without attachments, I have no other dependable attachment in the heart. This trustworthy attachment too, blossoming as my own real nature, ended up as liberation, the supreme of supremes that is absolutely free from attachments.

987 My desire now burgeons totally towards my Lord who had transformed me into the form of oneness, the state of authentic grace that is most difficult to encounter. As a result, the Lord himself who brought me under his feet by granting me the much sought after wealth of the ultimate truth became everything for me.

988 My desire is exclusively the love of dwelling under the feet of my Lord. How can there be any desire for ignoble sense objects? Is my mind, which has attained the magnificence of devotion to my Lord, bound to ruin itself by losing its chastity, becoming a prostitute?

989 To my revelling consciousness that has mingled with the *Sivam* that brought me under its spell, how can an association with anything else possibly arise? Other than my own reality, the supreme wherein *jnana* is fully aroused, where are objects towards which I can possess an attitude of craving?

990 Will the mind that delights in and enjoys the real nature of

my Lord ever come to possess a desire for other enjoyments? Will the desire to drink water from a mirage arise in the heart of someone who has exulted by drinking the flooding waters of the auspicious Ganga?

991 Let others attain to their heart's content the pleasures of this life and those of the life of celestials, which are fundamentally flawed lives. As for myself, I do not desire or seek anything else other than the life of *mauna* that has the lofty status of *Sivam*, above which nothing exists.

My Lord protects me

992 He is the one with the feet that protect as a shield the souls of those who have taken refuge in them, losing themselves in them. When he is shining in his full glory as the splendrous sun of *jnana* in my heart, how can I languish and pine?

993 My Lord drove out from my heart the enemies who had entered it and firmly imprinted there the seal of his footprint, the protecting guard of grace. Now those enemies [*vasanas*][76] can no longer accumulate there.

994 Who else is there to succour me except for my Lord, he who truly protects and fosters me with great care. For me, I who worshipped my Lord as my true foundation, my Lord in truth became my extremely beloved Self.

995 Venkatava, you who are full of the power that helps those who have come to you. You are the protection for those who have abandoned everything. That which is an immeasurable, immense ocean of scorching birth for other people is, for your devotees, merely a puddle formed in the hoof print of a cow.

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[76] A note to this verse by Muruganar himself indicates that the enemies are *vasanas*.

My senses now experience the Self

When the 'I' permanently disappears in its source, the dichotomy of experience and experienced vanishes as well. In that state the senses can bring enjoyment without being mediated through an individual enjoyer. When one knows that nothing exists apart from the Self, even sensory enjoyment is an experience of the Self.

996 I will not enter the domain of the five senses through the doorways of the five sense organs by abandoning my Lord who bestowed on me the supreme devotion that is *jnana*. But even if I enter their domain through the five organs, I will function through them with the clear knowledge that all of them are the consummate consciousness, *Atma-swarupa*.

997 Through a careful investigation instigated by your grace I realised my nature to be your nature. Through the real first person who shines flourishingly in the Self as the Self I obtained the life of supreme bliss, the life of grace that persists in all the five sense experiences through which I see, hear, taste, smell and feel only you.

My Lord dissolved my mind

998 Because the treacherous mind dissolved completely in my Lord, both inside and outside became one identical expanse. I rejoiced, disporting in the flood of clear ambrosia, the experience of *Brahma swarupa* that cannot be cleaved apart.

999 Let others pine, languish and grow weary [indulging] in mental concepts. When the Lord lovingly instructed me, his companion, the mind simply left, seeing no support for itself to cling to, and the fullness of being shone forth.

1000 I consume bliss effortlessly by remaining still. My Lord enabled me to do this by destroying the obstacle to it, the deceitful mind whose nature is to remain bewildered. My true desire, which I seek for all my ensuing births, is only to

have the welling up of love towards my Lord, the one who provides succour to my soul.

1001 Lord Ramana, the performer of supreme *tapas*, dwells at Arunai, which is praised even by celestials. Those others whose *tapas* has not yet been perfected and who have therefore not yet merged in the feet of Ramana are investigating the state of remaining still. While they conclude that this state is extremely difficult [to attain], what is difficult for us is making any thought at all arise in our still minds.

My Lord adopted me as his son

1002 My Lord accepted me as a son who is entitled to his grace in order to make the anxieties caused by delusion cease in my mind, and also to make me enjoy the bliss of *swarupa* in the state of *mauna* by remaining still as beingness in the heart.

1003 My Lord, the emperor who lives as the shore of the sea of learning, of his own accord adopted me, a refugee, as his son by bestowing upon me in this world his wealth of grace, *jnana*, causing all the many obstacles to flee.

1004 Through the way in which he adopted me in former times, he revealed to me the truth as a direct experience by consuming me wholly as himself. What will now become of the meditative thought I used to have towards my Lord who blazes forth in my heart as my own Self, the reality?

My Lord made me bloom

1005 My Lord made my life blossom. Taking his feet of reddish gold as my crown, I was enabled to rule in this world the kingdom of liberation whose nature is the consciousness-the-supreme that is grace. All the five senses became the citizens who rendered personal service to me.

1006 Through meditating on my Lord every day – 'My Lord,

my Lord, my Lord, my Lord' – I received the blessing in which my Lord himself blossomed as my own real nature. Now, other than my Lord, nothing alien to him exists for me.

My Lord granted me desirelessness

1007 Dwelling under my Lord's feet of grace, what surged in my heart, filling it to the brim, was the pre-eminent wealth of desirelessness. Is not true wealth merely the contentment that arises through the extremely pure true *jnana* in which thought does not originate and rise?

1008 When I died, having become a prey to the feet of my Lord whose nature is the *turiya* that is the truth of Sonachala [Arunachala], Self-experience surged forth in my heart. Through this experience all the profitless desires completely perished, and the extremely lofty and intense desire for him matured into desirelessness.

1009 For those who worship with their whole heart the feet of the Lord, the distinguishing banner will only be the quality of not desiring anything. The totality of *vairagya* [dispassion] that has arisen towards other things by not having a desire for them is a support for the firm establishment of *bhakti* that one has already developed.

My Lord gave me peace

1010 I experience the bliss of peace in the cool shade that is my true state, having become totally freed from the scorching afflictions caused by the deceitful mind. I therefore have no desire to rejoice in the non-Self but only in the bliss of grace-supreme, the Self that is my true nature, which alone is entitled to one's love.

1011 You who are the *swarupa*, abiding as the nature of the bliss of *mauna*! I do not say anything to flatter you. It is not possible

for me to describe with my tongue the glory of the state of peace, saturated with supreme bliss, that you granted me.

1012 My refugee soul was sheltered by my Lord who remained permanently in my heart, taking it to be his temple. I abided in *Sivam*, rejoicing in peace, with the collection of *vasanas*, the cunning and mischievous inner enemies, ruined and destroyed.

Darshan of my Lord

1013 On the very day I first saw my Lord he bestowed his grace, engendering within my heart attention to being. As a consequence of this, all days became auspicious and all places became holy places for me. Therefore, for my beloved soul, the day on which I [first] had the good fortune of having my Lord's *darshan* became the truly auspicious day for me.

1014 If seeing those who have seen [reality] is itself a blessing, what can one say about the magnificence of the good fortune of those who have seen [reality itself]?

1015 At the very sight of my Lord I was bewitched and effortlessly lost in his grace. My infatuation for other things ceased. That very thought bestowed on me the prosperous life of *swarupa* in this vast world.

1016 As soon as I saw his form of grace, like a magnet he pulled and held my heart. He turned the little love I entertained for him into a powerful shackle. When I sought his grace to experience him, he gathered and swallowed me in one go, using my entreaty as a pretext. This is how my Lord ruled me.[77]

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[77] Muruganar gave a title to this verse: 'The Way his Grace Ruled.'

1017 I saw his lotus-like face when he tugged me with the cord of his grace. Taking my thought of him as his gateway, he entered my heart and remained seated there, without leaving. I became incapable of forgetting him. I came to possess love for his feet, and that became my way of life.

My Lord danced in my heart

1018 God, the transcendental supreme truth! Your revelation of true *jnana* performs the dance that enables your truth to surge continuously in my heart as my real nature. Through the expansion and spreading of your revelation, this world too became for me the supreme expanse.

1019 My dancing Lord performed the dance of true *jnana* in my heart, revealing my *swarupa* and bringing to an end my 'I am the fleshy body' dance. I now live under his feet with an abundant exhilaration coupled with divine pride, an experience in which joy perpetually abounds. It has made other desires depart and vanish, becoming tasteless.

My Lord took my heart to be his temple

1020 Heart is the temple and pure consciousness is his divine presence. My Lord exists thought-free in his temple.

1021 He has taken my heart as his temple. He is the Lord who, with his look, eradicated my veiling ego that rises in ignoble delusion. He is the Lord who is the expanse of tranquillity, saturated with the flood of supreme bliss. He stood as the luminous expanse of *mauna*, the Heart, ending the difference of within and without.

1022 Making yourself very easily and fully accessible to me in an appropriate way, you took up residence in my heart, I who was an insignificant person. Such was your mastery over the quality of divine grace. Because I, your slave, have obtained within myself you who are extremely great, I am also now great, not insignificant.

My Lord bestowed liberation

1023 The Lord enlightens those who have fearfully resorted to him, bestowing the non-dual knowledge of their real nature that is the fear-free state. Now that they have become free from fear, he is adored by them as the perfect love that exists in their hearts, where he dwells as nothing but bliss.

1024 My Lord revealed to me, as my own nature, liberation, the supreme attainment that is regarded as existing far, far away. He took as his abode the ancient holy place of Tiruvarunai [Tiruvannamalai], already shining with an overflowing glory, in order that it would come to possess and glow more brightly with even more fame.

1025 My Lord awakened me, an insignificant person, fully into the state whose nature is absolute freedom, the pure, concept-free grace. When the life of dwelling at his ruddy golden feet surged in my heart as fullness, the word 'That' and the word 'Thou' merged as one in the word 'Are'.[78]

1026 My Lord established me in the state of *swarupa*, the state of *turiya*, a state that cannot be thought of, much less described. Bearing his feet as an ornament for my head, I now rule the world of liberation, freed from the veiling delusion that brings with it the misery-generating mental movements.

1027 I offered my mind to the Lord, he who has the unsurpassed feet of grace that are an ornament for the head of this slave. As a result, I obtained the wealth of liberation, the state of endless supreme bliss. Now, I will not go after anyone else in this world.

Dharma, *artha*, *kama*, and *moksha*

Hindu scriptures have identified four acceptable goals or ways of life:

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[78] A reference to the *mahavakya* '*Tat tvam asi*' – 'That you are'. The demonstrative and personal pronouns merge into 'are', the state of being.

Dharma: the performance of obligatory duties in an ethical way.
Artha: the acquisition of wealth through righteous means.
Kama: the happiness derived from sensual enjoyments.
Moksha: liberation, the natural state of abiding as the Self.

While Hinduism accepts that liberation, *moksha*, is the highest and ultimate attainment, it does not denigrate worldly desires and accomplishments. Instead, it recommends that they be pursued ethically and not indulged in to excess. Dharma, *artha* and *kama* give a moral framework to the everyday activities of ordinary people, but when *moksha* is attained, these rules no longer apply since the one who was formerly enjoined to obey them has ceased to exist. In that final state it is the Self that determines what is done or left undone. No individual intermediary remains who can choose specific courses of conduct.

In the following verses Muruganar praises his Guru for bestowing on him the state of liberation, thus freeing him from the choices and constraints that bind those who are still enmeshed in the rules and regulations of dharma, *artha* and *kama*.

1028 Four legitimate goals are specified: dharma, *artha*, *kama*, in which an object is enjoyed though all the five senses, and liberation, the state of supreme bliss wherein one shines as the supernal light. These, along with the rare soul of this slave who experiences them, exist as nothing other than the feet of the Guru who ruled over me by transforming me into the *swarupa* that shines as being-consciousness.

1029 If the mind becomes clear by merging in one's real nature, the basis for all dharmas, there will never be any need to perform other dharmaś. A shower of rain will come from the cloud of Siva-dharma,[79] as a consequence of which supreme bliss will arise.

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[79] The dharma of abiding as *Sivam*.

1030 The king of grace, my Guru, bestowed on me, I who was a dull-witted and crazy man who wandered like a wooden block without wisdom, the life of living in supreme truth, *mauna*, that state to which dharma *artha* and *kama* bow their heads.

1031 He revealed firmly in my heart the tranquillity that is the state of supreme truth, compelling dharma, *artha* and *kama* – all of them – to depart from the mind as mere concepts and lose their glitter in the land of liberation.

1032 The Lord of compassion, totally beyond compare, granted me the state of supreme truth that for me overflows as the entirety of dharma, *artha* and *kama*, putting an end to my mental anxieties and afflictions.

1033 You alone are the supreme dharma that rises high and prospers. You alone are the supremely worthy wealth [*artha*], the wealth that, ever full, never diminishes. You alone are the love [*kama*] that exists in my heart, shedding lustre. You alone are the liberation [*moksha*], the state of unsurpassed bliss.

The gifts bestowed by my Lord

1034 Once upon a time I thought my Lord would give me nothing. Later on I could find nothing I could point out and say, 'What is this that he has not given me?' My earlier misgiving turned out to be a delusion of mind, and I felt ashamed.

1035 I beseeched him, 'Give me something, anything.' He glanced at me, eliminating completely the ego that arises through ignorance. Declaring, 'What is it that exists as everything? That supreme is only you,' he bestowed on me the experience of reality as my own Self.

1036 My Lord bestowed on me a loving attachment to surging

Sivam, that which brings great benefit, in such a way that the deluding attachment to harmful sense objects was abolished. As I continued to think of his feet, he entered my heart and swallowed my very soul, an act that resulted in the death and extinction of the 'I' thought.

1037 My father bestowed in my heart the ultimate benefit, making me exclaim with divine pride, 'Who is there equal to me?' I now live prosperously, filled with the feeling of supreme devotion that flourished in the genuine devotion I practised towards him, deeming myself to be his servant.

1038 If my Guru Lord had not brought me under his rule and bestowed the immortal state, I would, unfortunately, have had to die and be ruined in the dream of illusion. As the ambrosia that completely fills my eyes, he revealed himself in such a way that I could see in my intuitive understanding the supreme state, from where I cannot return again to the dream.

1039 The virtuous one, Guru Ramana, he who is my Lord, bestowed with delight the light of peace that completely ends the anxieties that arise from the delusion brought about by ignorance. If that peace, which is like simultaneously attaining all possible blessings, ceases to exist for the *jiva*, what could possibly be the benefit of any of the other blessings?

1040 When the will bestowed on me by the Lord became wholly my own will, leaving no will of my own, I rejoiced in supreme *mauna*, which is perpetually free from the sense of deficiency termed 'I'. Feelings of hardship and loss departed as mere concepts of the deluded mind.

The generosity of my Lord

1041 There is no limit to the grace-bestowing liberality of my

Lord, the *jnani*, the brilliant one who shines in my heart, endowing it with beauty.

1042 My Lord, that uniquely generous person, is abundantly present in my heart as *jnana*, the flood of grace. As a result, I exist as the fullness of supreme bliss, free of affliction, lacking nothing and having no desires.

1043 People say: 'He is a liberal person who helps those who resort to him. He is a *jnani* who has mastered it [*jnana*] faultlessly. He is totally free from any folly.' But he is slightly foolish because he possesses the quality of unrestricted munificence, that of bestowing his grace without looking into the worthiness of the recipient – a foolishness which I patently saw in my own case.

1044 Since all praised him as one of unbounded liberality, I came to him expectantly, and with joy. The bounteous 'giver' looked at me and stealthily plundered my very self! Great indeed is the liberality of this bountiful giver!

1045 You compelled me to remain under the shade of your feet, established your real nature in my heart and dammed up the bliss of consciousness there. Can anything be compared to your supreme munificence?

Muruganar standing in Ramanasramam, 1960s.

Concluding Verses

1046 Amongst your devotees there was none so worthless as myself. Even so, dwelling on you repeatedly in the heart, I gained the experience of pure, undivided *Brahman*. Not one among those who resort to you goes to waste.

1047 Desist from lamentations and feelings of affliction in the mind, and with devotion put yourself under the rule and protection of our Lord's feet. The minds of those who have become devoted slaves of the liberal donor, Sri Ramana, will abound with the light of *mauna* that even the celestials cannot imagine.

1048 For those who have come under the dominion of grace, the supreme bliss of our Lord, what need is there to be anxious? Do not experience even the slightest of sorrows. Our Lord, the primal silent one, is fully there for you as your eternal refuge.

1049 The desire of this slave is to have everyone assembled and settled down under the feet of my Lord so that all the people of this vast world are redeemed by obtaining in full measure the blessing that I attained.

1050 Existing as the foundation for all manifestation, my Lord, by remaining as the reliable and safe ladder, raises his devotees to the state of the supreme whose nature is bliss. Hurry to him without delay and become his devotees, and you will experience in the heart the absolute oneness, the state of grace that remains as your hereditary right.

1051 True devotees possessed by a desire for grace! The Lord exists as an ocean of grace. If you who resort to him to receive his grace have a mind capacious enough to contain it, you can scoop and consume this grace to your heart's content.

1052 May the grace-radiating temple of our father spread the light of enquiry that bestows *jnana*, which brings about the shining of the true knowledge of one's real nature and makes the hearts of those who think of him blossom. As long as the sun and moon endure, may it [this temple] flourish as the heart of the adherents of every religion.

1053 Like the cloud that showers rain, my Lord Ramana has the liberality that does not expect any recompense. He let me consume the honey-bliss of the Self, the experience in which 'I' myself exist as 'I', having first dammed it up my heart. May his feet of unsurpassed grandeur live long, spreading their glory!

1054 He whose nature is the absolutely perfect whole does not know his own greatness, but through that greatness he eradicated my pettiness and now rules over me. May the feeling of supreme peace, which is truly his greatness, flourish in all, proclaiming his greatness everywhere.

Sources of the Verses

Most of the verses featured in this book have been taken from *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*. In the following list the verse numbers of this book are followed in bold by their location in the Tamil edition that was published by the Delhi Ramana Kendra. The first bold number shows the volume number while the numbers that follow indicate the verse number. If the original source begins with letters, this indicates that the verses have been taken from other books. The abbreviations for the other books are as follows:

RDM: *Sri Ramana Deva Malai*
RSM: *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*
SRA: *Sri Ramana Anubhuti*

Preliminary Verses

1:**3.8**, 2:**3.19**, 3:**2.2**, 4:**5.1832**, 5:**5.1893**, 6:**6.154**, 7:**6.202**, 8:**3.30**, 9:**8.1**, 10:**3.16**, 11:**3.2**, 12:**5.4**, 13:**3.11**, 14:**3.118**, 15:**4.1817**, 16:**5.1801**, 17:**5.2**, 18:**3.4**, 19:**3.7**, 20:**3.5**, 21:**3.3**, 22:**8.634**, 23:**5.10**, 24:**5.1802**, 25:**8.1693**, 26:**1.7**, 27:**5.1554**, 28:**1.9**, 29:**7.1341**, 30:**3.10**, 31:**4.1751**.

The Feet of my Lord

32:**3.1457**, 33:**7.963**, 34:**3.1700**, 35:**3.422**, 36:**7.925**, 37:**6.1805**, 38:**5.1889**, 39:**5.1644**, 40:**3.1454**, 41:**6.1473**, 42:**1.81**, 43:**8.292**, 44:**3.350**, 45:**5.1666**, 46:**7.1052**, 47:**7.1295**, 48:**5.1884**, 49:**7.1266**, 50:**7.1301**, 51:**6.1019**, 52:**3.443**.

The Self

53:**1.958**, 54:**1.640**, 55:**1.1243**, 56:**8.696**, 57:**1.725**, 58:**1.375**, 59:**1.1259**,

60:**5.371,** 61:**5.1348,** 62:**7.123,** 63:**7.1495,** 64:**7.1109,** 65:**7.1155,** 66:**8.913,** 67:**8.880,** 68:**5.1580,** 69:**6.804,** 70:**1.1111,** 71:**7.1167,** 72:**1.1244,** 73:**1.1097,** 74:**1.1079,** 75:**7.1100,** 76:**8.1220,** 77:**1.957,** 78:**1.1807,** 79:**7.195,** 80:**5.1378,** 81:**6.1449,** 82:**7.157,** 83:**6.1385,** 84:**6.1507,** 85:**6.704,** 86:**7.1254,** 87:**6.1397,** 88:**6.1741**, 89:**8.801,** 90:**7.616,** 91:**1.1696,** 92:**6.833,** 93:**7.78,** 94:**7.1336**, 95:**7.1517,** 96:**7.1539,** 97:**8.787.**

The Presence of my Lord

98:**RDM 176,** 99:**5.1757,** 100:**6.27,** 101:**1.187,** 102:**3.284,** 103:**RDM 175,** 104:**7.857,** 105:**4.1275,** 106:**4.1296,** 107:**4.1265,** 108:**3.639,** 109:**4.1228,** 110:**5.1925,** 111:**4.1218,** 112:**4.1268,** 113:**6.1794,** 114:**4.1221,** 115:**7.1120,** 116: **RDM 173,** 117:**3.251.**

Consciousness

118:**8.833,** 119:**8.834,** 120:**SRA 197,** 121:**7.273,** 122:**8.1724,** 123:**1.831,** 124:**1.74,** 125:**7.444,** 126:**7.593,** 127:**8.604,** 128:**1.799,** 129:**5.1508,** 130:**5.1053,** 131:**6.346,** 132:**4.1434,** 133:**5.2018,** 134:**1.1241,** 135:**1.256,** 136:**1.1663,** 137:**6.184,** 138:**6.569,** 139:**6.571,** 140:**6.1253,** 141:**6.1723,** 142:**8.1658,** 143:**7.361,** 144:**6.1170,** 145:**5.1022,** 146:**1.1029,** 147:**8.55,** 148:**1.132,** 149:**7.253,** 150:**6.29,** 151:**4.1497,** 152:**6.949,** 153:**3.1054,** 154:**1.841,** 155:**6.204,** 156:**3.755,** 157:**6.881,** 158:**6.1777,** 159:**6.136,** 160:**3.1078,** 161:**8.114,** 162:**8.705,** 163:**7.1443,** 164:**7.80,** 165:**1.345,** 166:**1.343,** 167:**5.1577,** 168:**1.1160,** 169:**1.1075,** 170:**8.1002,** 171:**8.1119,** 172:**5.1455,** 173:**5.24,** 174:**5.1483,** 175:**6.91,** 176:**7.842,** 177:**6.682,** 178:**4.486,** 179:**6.783,** 180:**7.243,** 181 **3.214,** 182:**6.690,** 183:**4.410,** 184:**5.880,** 185:**6.276,** 186:**4.798,** 187:**6.75,** 188:**5.1458,** 189:**5.175,** 190:**5.1689,** 191:**5.1935,** 192:**6.643,** 193:**6.197,** 194:**7.248,** 195:**7.1018,** 196:**8.330,** 197:**6.1318,** 198:**4.540,** 199:**5.2060,** 200:**5.444,** 201:**5.1175.**

The Nature of my Lord

202:**1.160,** 203:**1.163,** 204:**1.153,** 205:**1.159,** 206:**6.12,** 207:**6.801,** 208:**1.152,** 209:**7.892,** 210:**4.1376,** 211:**3.228,** 212:**7.541,** 213:**7.893,** 214:**8.1664,** 215:**7.862,** 216:**7.752,** 217:**8.1636,** 218:**5.619,** 219:**5.263,** 220:**6.883,** 221:**4.1362,** 222:**8.1579.**

Mauna

223:**7.244,** 224:**7.530,** 225:**1.1082,** 226:**1.1395,** 227:**8.1501,** 228:**7.242,**

The Shining of my Lord

229:**7.900,** 230:**RDM 186,** 231:**7.488,** 232:**7.994,** 233:**RDM 185,** 234:**8.434,** 235:**7.500,** 236:**3.1067,** 237:**3.1338,** 238:**3.863,** 239:**6.1189,** 240:**3.1152,** 241:**3.701,** 242:**4.671,** 243:**5.1426,** 244:**4.266,** 245:**6.289,** 246:**6.418,** 247:**6.1300,** 248:**6.1109,** 249:**4.196,** 250:**6.1120,** 251:**3.593** and **3.594,** 252:**6.1173.**

The Name and Form of my Lord

253:**RSM 1521,** 254:**RDM 201,** 255:**6.1161,** 256:**4.1257,** 257:**RDM 182,** 258:**3.111,** 259:**3.978,** 260:**6.367,** 261:**2.11,** 262:**7.822,** 263:**RDM 165,** 264:**7.904,** 265:**7.902,** 266:**4.1323,** 267:**6.1245,** 268:**4.669,** 269:**4.970,** 270:**4.994,** 271:**5.1313,** 272:**1.168,** 273:**7.1049,** 274:**RDM 139,** 275:**SRA 556,** 276:**SRA 557,** 277:**7.1047.**

Jnana

278:**8.1488,** 279:**1.1550,** 280:**1.1098,** 281:**8.1061,** 282:**4.710,** 283:**4.618,** 284:**4.590,** 285:**4.716,** 286:**4.730,** 287:**4.1367,** 288:**1.1667,** 289:**1.1668,** 290:**1.1673,** 291:**7.1509,** 292:**7.583,** 293:**7.1511,** 294:**7.1526,** 295:**7.1457,** 296:**1.1983,** 297:**7.1530,** 298:**1.1928,** 299:**8.1741,** 300:**7.1533,** 301:**7.1528,** 302:**8.165,** 303:**7.1491,** 304:**7.1478,** 305:**7.1381,** 306:**7.589,** 307:**5.172,** 308:**6.595,** 309:**7.454.**

The Thought of my Lord

310:**4:1401,** 311:**4.198,** 312:**8.749,** 313:**1.202,** 314:**1.203,** 315:**6.797,** 316:**4.1513,** 317:**RDM 119,** 318:**6.966,** 319:**6.972,** 320:**8.392,** 321:**SRA 57,** 322:**3.751.**

The Guru

323:**1.1148,** 324:**8.1253,** 325:**7.1039,** 326:**7.833,** 327:**7.916,** 328:**7.879,** 329:**7.1053,** 330:**7.764,** 331:**8.808,** 332:**4.549,** 333:**4.1327,** 334:**6.236,** 335:**3.771,** 336:**6.1401,** 337:**6.7,** 338:**3.694,** 339:**6.1795,** 340:**3.283,** 341:**3.262,** 342:**6.531,** 343:**7.779,** 344:**8.1254,** 345:**7.1006,** 346:**7.717,** 347:**7.899,** 348:**6.1462,** 349:**5.1883,** 350:**7.582,** 351:**7.876,** 352:**5.824,** 353:**6.266,** 354:**6.1802,** 355:**7.756,** 356:**5.1894,** 357:**3.542,** 358:**8.1118,** 359:**3.1007,** 360:**3.1011,** 361:**3.1019,** 362:**3.1020,** 363:**3.1022,** 364:**3.1023,** 365:**3.1028,** 366:**5.1257,** 367:**6.1468,** 368:**6.1464,** 369:**6.1574.**

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My Lord ruled over me

370:**7.590,** 371:**5.1932,** 372:**3.538,** 373:**7.934,** 374:**4.1413,** 375:**4.1185,** 376:**3.266,** 377:**4.1338,** 378:**3.851,** 379:**3.136,** 380:**5.1860,** 381:**3.509,** 382:**3.129,** 383:**2.199,** 384:**3.131,** 385:**3.566,** 386:**4.1400,** 387:**2.407,** 388:**5.1657,** 389:**6.258,** 390:**6.1050,** 391:**7.1108,** 392:**8.1683,** 393:**6.600,** 394:**5.1374.**

Grace

395:**6.168,** 396:**7.912,** 397:**7.1317,** 398:**6.969,** 399:**6.1027,** 400:**8.821,** 401:**4.445,** 402:**SRA 40,** 403:**1.647,** 404:**3.1445,** 405:**7.1243,** 406:**6.1382,** 407:**6.1301,** 408:**6.624,** 409:**6.1930,** 410:**6.421,** 411:**8.168,** 412:**7.227,** 413:**6.925,** 414:**1.654,** 415:**3.919,** 416:**6.1673,** 417:**8.192,** 418:**7.847,** 419:**8.489,** 420:**7.245,** 421:**1.244,** 422:**1.91,** 423:**8.1054,** 424:**8.802,** 425:**6.357,** 426:**5.246,** 427:**4.212,** 428:**3.1404,** 429:**4.1246,** 430:**6.961,** 431:**7.387,** 432:**7.839,** 433:**7.1361,** 434:**8.1606.**

My Lord, the Heart

435:**4.1346,** 436:**4.1348,** 437:**8.364,** 438:**5.1440,** 439:**5.574,** 440:**5.578,** 441:**5.634,** 442:**5.803,** 443:**5.610,** 444:**6.1735,** 445:**5.621,** 446:**1.135,** 447:**6.861,** 448:**5.723,** 449:**6.1629,** 450:**3.216,** 451:**3.1243,** 452:**4.1437,** 453:**6.1008,** 454:**5.128,** 455:**3.653,** 456:**5.588,** 457:**7.740,** 458:**7.148,** 459:**6.1465,** 460:**7.1419,** 461:**1.1645,** 462:**8.1016.**

Spiritual Practice

463:**8.607,** 464:**8.1051,** 465:**7.84,** 466:**7.85,** 467:**7.404,** 468:**1.869,** 469:**1.864,** 470:**7.389,** 471:**7.218,** 472:**1.242,** 473:**7.340,** 474:**1.663,** 475:**8.1007,** 476:**8.1096,** 477:**8.462,** 478:**SRA 174,** 479:**7.217,** 480:**8.1133,** 481:**8.457,** 482:**8.1217,** 483:**8.540,** 484:**8.845,** 485:**1.673,** 486:**8.574,** 487:**8.727,** 488:**8.728,** 489:**5.122,** 490:**6.892,** 491:**3.472,** 492:**7.455,** 493:**1.280,** 494:**8.394,** 495:**1.711,** 496:**1.712,** 497:**7.1475,** 498:**1.723,** 499:**7.1363,** 500:**8.1559,** 501:**8.1560,** 502:**8.396,** 503:**8.579,** 504:**7.228,** 505:**7.344,** 506:**1.668,** 507:**6.1929,** 508:**7.402,** 509:**8.1023,** 510:**7.1256,** 511:**1.533,** 512:**1.430,** 513:**8.358,** 514:**1.1070,** 515:**8.324,** 516:**8.582,** 517:**7.1089,** 518:**7.377,** 519:**7.328,** 520:**8.914,** 521:**7.194,** 522:**SRA 202,** 523:**1.532,** 524:**1.534,** 525:**1.528,** 526:**7.1492,** 527:**1.683,** 528:**7.40,** 529:**8.405,** 530:**1.78,** 531:**7.1119,** 532:**5.1913,** 533:**8.1358,** 534:**1.90,** 535: **8.795,** 536:**8.480,** 537:**1.665.**

The Divine and Real 'I'

538:**7.11,** 539:**1.827,** 540:**5.1992,** 541:**3.254,** 542:**4.433,** 543:**3.558,** 544:**1.371,** 545:**7.153,** 546:**7.634,** 547:**8.57,** 548:**3.529,** 549:**5.808,** 550:**3.1256,** 551:**6.1570.**

My Lord Shines

552:**3.257,** 553:**5.1873,** 554:**5.572,** 555:**5.373,** 556:**6.135,** 557:**6.230,** 558:**1.286,** 559:**5.581,** 560:**6.627,** 561:**5.858,** 562:**3.243,** 563:**4.1421,** 564:**5.631,** 565:**6.1588,** 566:**8.290,** 567:**3.462,** 568:**5.570.**

Book Learning and the Scriptures

569:**7.923,** 570:**7.350,** 571:**7.518,** 572:**1.259,** 573:**1.257,** 574:**1.887,** 575:**7.81,** 576:**1.264,** 577:**1.1394,** 578:**RDM 184,** 579:**5.893,** 580:**8.1819,** 581:**3.535,** 582:**4.737,** 583:**6.935,** 584:**5.886,** 585:**3.524.**

The Eye of my Lord

586:**6.563,** 587:**6.1128,** 588:**5.615,** 589:**6.110,** 590:**6.1366,** 591:**4.1532,** 592:**4.721,** 593:**6.957,** 594:**5.1585,** 595:**5.1744,** 596:**6.237,** 597:**6.1610,** 598:**7.1332,** 599:**7.1335,** 600:**6.253.**

Individual Identity

601:**1.491,** 602:**1.500,** 603:**1.485,** 604:**1.486,** 605:**1.517,** 606:**1.520,** 607:**7.207,** 608:**8.1283,** 609:**8.18,** 610:**7.1158,** 611:**7.814,** 612:**1.591,** 613:**8.32,** 614:**8.295,** 615:**1.1629,** 616:**8.626,** 617:**1.493,** 618:**1.570,** 619:**7.680,** 620:**7.368,** 621:**8.911,** 622:**3.1337,** 623:**6.839,** 624:**4.1478,** 625:**5.600,** 626:**6.1466,** 627:**4.354,** 628:**7.1319,** 629:**4.362,** 630:**4.1388,** 631:**5.309,** 632:**5.396,** 633:**5.761,** 634:**8.1490,** 635:**7.1452,** 636:**1.574,** 637:**7.580,** 638:**6.123,** 639:**7.961,** 640:**1.487,** 641:**1.508,** 642:**5.1755,** 643:**1.588,** 644:**1.583,** 645:**7.90,** 646:**7.214,** 647:**6.1592,** 648:**5.141,** 649:**8.877,** 650:**3.711,** 651:**8.1650,** 652:**7.1480,** 653:**7.887,** 654:**1.503,** 655:**4.1791,** 656:**5.313,** 657:**6.778,** 658:**1.518,** 659:**8.623,** 660:**1.554,** 661:**5.295,** 662:**5.415,** 663:**7.112,** 664:**5.1651,** 665:**3.534,** 666:**7.1001,** 667:**8.304,** 668:**5.1116,** 669:**4.719,** 670:**3.1855,** 671:**5.2038,** 672:**8.588,** 673:**7.23,** 674:**7.498,** 675:**7.988,** 676:**7.996,** 677:**1.626,** 678:**1.662,** 679:**5.1722,** 680:**7.666,** 681:**6.1400,** 682:**7.33,** 683:**7.261,** 684:**8.605,** 685:**7.681,** 686:**1.1131,** 687:**8.109,** 688:**7.152,** 689:**6.592,** 690:**5.1301,** 691:**5.227,** 692:**6.66,** 693:**6.391.**

Sources of the Verses

The Mind and its States

694:**1.489,** 695:**8.1105,** 696:**1.420,** 697:**1.469,** 698:**8.417,** 699:**7.429,** 700:**1.467,** 701:**1.438,** 702:**1.432,** 703:**1.433,** 704:**1.441,** 705:**1.443,** 706:**1.448,** 707:**1.452,** 708:**1.459,** 709:**8.221,** 710:**8.227,** 711:**8.855,** 712:**8.1438,** 713:**7.676,** 714:**6.175,** 715:**5.2031,** 716:**6.252,** 717:**5.763,** 718:**5.632,** 719:**8.329,** 720:**5.722,** 721:**5.809,** 722:**5.743,** 723:**4.521.**

The Gracious Look of my Lord

724:**4.110,** 725:**4.1181,** 726:**5.597,** 727:**4.904,** 728:**4.1072,** 729:**4.1397,** 730:**7.911,** 731:**4.1105,** 732:**1.188,** 733:**6.235,** 734:**4.1044,** 735:**6.362,** 736:**6.378,** 737:**4.341,** 738:**4.1030,** 739:**4.891,** 740:**6.227,** 741:**7.1388,** 742:**6.228,** 743:**3.237,** 744:**4.1111,** 745:**6.285,** 746:**6.1702,** 747:**5.720,** 748:**4.1012,** 749:**4.368,** 750:**4.790,** 751:**4.961,** 752:**6.133,** 753:**4.974,** 754:**4.1073,** 755:**4.1070,** 756:**4.247.**

What my Lord Abolished

757:**4.350,** 758:**5.261,** 759:**5.911,** 760:**6.132,** 761:**5.1814,** 762:**6.1677,** 763:**6.1734,** 764:**6.1349,** 765:**5.1328,** 766:**5.594,** 767:**3.742,** 768:**6.352,** 769:**1.716,** 770:**4.578,** 771:**6.166,** 772:**6.383,** 773:**6.1778,** 774:**6.894,** 775:**5.245,** 776:**6.268,** 777:**4.330,** 778:**5.462,** 779:**5.1298,** 780:**4.1391,** 781:**5.1114,** 782:**5.452,** 783:**5.287,** 784:**5.143,** 785:**5.144,** 786:**2.987,** 787:**6.1406,** 788:**5.1265,** 789:**5.1646,** 790:**6.115,** 791:**6.288,** 792:**6.1786,** 793:**4.1164.**

Love, Devotion and Surrender

794:**8.21,** 795:**8.1200,** 796:**7.92,** 797:**1.1918,** 798:**3.758,** 799:**6.255,** 800:**2.734,** 801:**3.596,** 802:**3.1398,** 803:**3.1424,** 804:**5.616,** 805:**2.538,** 806:**2.612,** 807:**2.637,** 808:**2.84,** 809:**2.29,** 810:**2.30,** 811:**2.88,** 812:**6.1054,** 813:**6.1113,** 814:**5.1048,** 815:**4.313,** 816:**7.1218,** 817:**7.1020,** 818:**8.141,** 819:**8.142,** 820:**7.678,** 821:**5.158,** 822:**7.1221,** 823:**1.157,**824:**4.623,** 825:**1.1917,** 826:**7.1287,** 827:**8.686,** 828:**7.1513,** 829:**1.1976,** 830:**3.49,** 831:**1.763,** 832:**1.722,** 833:**3.310,** 834:**8.1046,** 835:**1.752,** 836:**7.1004,** 837:**7.1265,** 838:**8.1754,** 839:**1.1980,** 840:**4.1407,** 841:**4.1795,** 842:**1.612,** 843:**3.147,** 844:**8.139,** 845:**8.1285,** 846:**1.707,** 847:**SRA 127,** 848:**1.616,** 849:**1.613,** 850:**8.122,** 851:**1.240,** 852:**1.621,** 853:**1.1260,** 854:**5.1862,** 855:**4.1505,** 856:**6.519,** 857:**3.410,** 858:**7.1535,** 859:**7.1008,** 860:**6.1594.**

Service and Worship

861:**3.550,** 862:**3.525,** 863:**4.1752,** 864:**5.1553,** 865:**6.1458,** 866:**5.666,** 867:**7.1276,** 868:**7.169,** 869:**7.116,** 870:**7.1391,** 871:**8.781,** 872:**3.1069,** 873:**5.1879,** 874:**5.1875,** 875:**5.1876,** 876:**8.140,** 877:**8.265,** 878:**8.1421,** 879:**8.1422,** 880:**6.1749,** 881:**7.1293,** 882:**RDM 19,** 883:**4.1387,** 884:**8.1060,** 885:**7.739,** 886:**7.834,** 887:**5.1295,** 888:**3.1080,** 889:**5.1597,** 890:**4.1669,** 891:**6.1831.**

The Reality of the World

892:**1.285,** 893:**1.304,** 894:**1.291,** 895:**8.587,** 896:**8.1125,** 897:**1.349,** 898:**5.1769,** 899:**6.134,** 900:**5.745,** 901:**5.1168,** 902:**7.628,** 903:**1.350,** 904:**1.902,** 905:**7.396,** 906:**6.849,** 907:**8.245,** 908:**7.130,** 909:**1.289,** 910:**1.281,** 911:**7.631,** 912:**7.1488,** 913:**6.55,** 914:**6.1727,** 915:**7.1439,** 916:**5.268,** 917:**6.52,** 918:**6.923,** 919:**3.1657,** 920:**7.913,** 921:**5.754,** 922:**4.1498.**

Aspects of my Lord

923:**8.819,** 924:**7.991,** 925:**1.227,** 926:**RDM 194,** 927:**8.1788,** 928:**3.530,** 929:**8.1793,** 930:**RDM 171,** 931:**RDM 172,** 932:**7.1522,** 933:**1.195,** 934:**7.775,** 935:**8.374,** 936:**8.1856,** 937:**5.575,** 938:**8.1852,** 939:**8.1854,** 940:**3.285,** 941:**1.167,** 942:**8.1637,** 943:**7.866.**

Venkata, my Lord

944:**RSM 1498,** 945:**RSM 1499,** 946:**RSM 1500,** 947:**RSM 1501,** 948:**RSM 1502,** 949:**RSM 1503,** 950:**RSM 1504,** 951:**RSM 1505,** 952:**RSM 1506,** 953:**RSM 1507,** 954:**RSM 1513,** 955:**RSM 1516,** 956:**RSM 1522,** 957:**RSM 1524,** 958:**RSM 1534,** 959:**RSM 1535,** 960:**RSM 1538,** 961:**RSM 1544,** 962:**RSM 1546,** 963:**RSM 1547,** 964:**RSM 1548,** 965:**RSM 165,** 966:**RSM 167,** 967:**RSM 168,** 968:**RSM 172,** 969:**RSM 174,** 970:**RSM 176,** 971:**RSM 177,** 972:**RSM 178,** 973:**RSM 180.**

The Blessings that Flowed from Association with my Lord

974:**RDM 170,** 975:**8.1180,** 976:**8.1182,** 977:**6.152,** 978:**2.200,** 979:**4.1780,** 980:**5.132,** 981:**6.1583,** 982:**2.103,** 983:**5.813,** 984:**5.879,** 985:**5.225,** 986:**5.230,** 987:**4.1140,** 988:**5.17,** 989:**5.16,** 990:**5.15,** 991:**5.20,** 992:**5.1930,** 993:**3.463,** 994:**6.799,** 995:**RDM 97,** 996:**5.1352,** 997:**4.1592,** 998:**5.996,** 999:**3.565,** 1000:**5.1809,** 1001:**RDM 202,**

Sources of the Verses

1002:**5.1660,** 1003:**5.1661,** 1004:**5.1552,** 1005:**6.598,** 1006:**6.638,**
1007:**6.1032,** 1008:**3.1299,** 1009:**7.465,** 1010:**5.18,** 1011:**4.1585,**
1012:**5.741,** 1013:**3.108,** 1014:**1.1988,** 1015:**3.74,** 1016:**2.980,**
1017:**3.619,** 1018:**4.1704,** 1019:**6.1501,** 1020:**5.508,** 1021:**5.649,**
1022:**4.1749,** 1023:**7.686,** 1024:**7.817,** 1025:**6.449,** 1026:**6.1335,**
1027:**6.1463,** 1028:**7.978,** 1029:**8.1196,** 1030:**4.636,** 1031:**4.639,**
1032:**4.626,** 1033:**4.1405,** 1034:**3.1436,** 1035:**4.608,** 1036:**3.1333,**
1037:**4.211,** 1038:**4.337,** 1039:**4.648,** 1040:**3.1308,** 1041:**1.190,**
1042:**5.623,** 1043:**7.850,** 1044:**7.851,** 1045:**4.1775.**

Concluding Verses

1046:**4.1541,** 1047:**8.737,** 1048:**8.690,** 1049:**5.2014,** 1050:**7.597,**
1051:**1.2139,** 1052:**1.2143,** 1053:**7.1565,** 1054:**3.174.**

Glossary

Agamas	Scriptural texts that primarily deal with the ritualistic side of the Saiva religion.
Aham	Self, the true or real 'I'.
Annamalai	The Tamil name for Arunachala, the mountain where Sri Ramana spent all his adult life.
anubhuti	Direct experience.
Atma	The Self.
Atma-swarupa	The Self, one's own true form or nature.
avasthas	The three alternating states of waking, dreaming and sleeping.
Brahman	The impersonal absolute reality of Hinduism.
Brahma-swarupa	*Brahman*, one's true nature.
buddhi	The intellect.
chit-jada	Literally 'consciousness-inert'. The term denotes the association of the inert body with the underlying consciousness that animates it. The bond that ties the two together is known as '*chit-jada-granthi*'. '*Granthi*' means 'knot,' so *chit-jada-granthi* is the knot that binds the inert body to consciousness.
chit-para	This is a compound noun in which *chit* denotes 'consciousness' and *para* 'the supreme'. '*Para*' is not an adjective here. It does not mean 'the supreme consciousness', which would imply that there are

	other, less exalted, varieties of consciousness. It literally means 'consciousness which is the supreme'.
darshan	To see or be seen by a Guru or God.
jiva	This is the soul or the individual entity that inhabits the body. In Saivism it is regarded as an entity that can either falsely identify with the body or attain union with Siva. In Sri Ramana's teachings it tends to be categorised as an unreal entity, the disappearance of which results in a direct and unmediated knowledge of the Self.
jnana	This means 'knowledge', but it does not denote a knowledge of 'things'. It is the direct and unmediated knowledge of one's own Self. One who has this knowledge is known as a '*jnani*'.
jnana-vichara	Self-enquiry; the enquiry that leads to *jnana*, or enquiry into the nature of *jnana*.
jnani	See *jnana*.
mahavakya	'Great statements.' More specifically, they are four key upanishadic statements that declare the nature of reality and one's identity with it.
malas	In Saiva Siddhanta there are three *malas* or impurities that prevent one from experiencing *Sivam*. They are *anava* (the ego), karma and *maya*.
mauna	'Silence.' This is not the antonym of noise but the rock-solid stillness of the Self and Self-abidance.
maya	Illusion; the power that makes the one reality appear as many.
Padam	Literally, 'the foot'. Muruganar uses it as a synonym to denote both Bhagavan and the Self.
pramada	Forgetfulness of the Self.
prarabdha	Destiny, or the predestined karma that the individual has to experience in each life.

rupa — Form.

Sadasivam — This has the same meaning as *Sivam* but it also has additional nuances. In Saiva Siddhanta philosophy *Sadasivam* is often used to characterise the grace-bestowing aspects and properties of *Sivam*.

Sadguru — A fully enlightened Guru who is established in *sat*, the underlying being or reality.

sadhana — Spiritual practice; the means by which liberation is attained.

sadhus — Full-time spiritual seekers who have renounced worldly responsibilities in order to seek enlightenment.

Saiva — The adjective formed from Siva. Saivism is a branch of Hinduism whose central tenet is worship of Siva. *Saivas* are followers of Siva.

Saiva Siddhanta — A religious and philosophical school of thought that arose and evolved in Tamil Nadu in the 12th and 13th century.

samsara — The continuous round of birth and death to which the *jiva* is subjected until it attains liberation; also, more generally, worldly life.

sastras — Scriptures.

Siddhanta — In this book it denotes Saiva Siddhanta.

siddhi — Literally it means 'attainment,' but it is more generally used to denote a supernatural power.

Sivam — The consciousness of Siva. Siva is the deity; *Sivam* is his true nature, his true consciousness.

sphurana — An emanation or radiation of the Self, often experienced as a pulsation of 'I' or 'I-I'. This 'I-I' pulsation is frequently used by Bhagavan to describe the experience of the Self, but on a few occasions he qualifies this by saying that it is a state that is experienced just before final realisation.

Glossary

Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham — A nine-volume collection of Muruganar's poetry edited and arranged by Sadhu Om. The title can be translated as 'The Experience of *Jnana* bestowed by Sri Ramana,' or 'Experiencing the *Jnana* that is Sri Ramana'.

Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai — A collection of Tamil devotional poems written by Muruganar and modelled on Manikkavachagar's *Tiruvachakam*. The title can be translated as 'Testament to Sri Ramana's Presence'.

suttarivu — Consciousness that has falsely divided itself into a seer and a seen.

swarupa — 'One's own true nature,' 'One's own true form'. It often appears preceded by *Atma*, the Self. *Atma-swarupa* means 'the Self, one's true nature or innate identity'.

tapas — Arduous spiritual practice, often with an element of self-mortification, undertaken to attain a spiritual goal.

Tiruvachakam — An anthology of devotional Saiva poetry composed in Tamil over a thousand years ago by Manikkavachagar.

triputis — The three interconnected processes of (a) knower, knowing and known or (b) seer, seeing and seen.

turiya — *Turiya* means 'the fourth'. It is the substratum in which the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping alternately manifest. One who is established as *turiya* has transcended the mind and its mental states and is established in the underlying Self.

Ulladu Narpadu — A forty-verse philosophical poem composed by Ramana Maharshi. Literally it means 'Forty on That Which Is,' but is generally translated as 'Forty Verses on Reality'.

Upadesa Undiyar — Ramana Maharshi's thirty-verse teaching poem. The better-known Sanskrit translation is entitled *Upadesa Saram*, 'The Essence of the Instructions'.

vasana — A desire or tendency of the mind; the feelings that compel one to behave in a particular way. In Sri Ramana's teachings *vasanas* are also the cause of the projected world that the individual creates and witnesses.

Vedas — The ultimate scriptural authorities for Hindus. They include the *Upanishads*, which are the original texts on which Vedanta is based.

venba — A four-line Tamil metrical verse form used by both Muruganar and Ramana Maharshi in their writings.

vichara — Enquiry, usually self-enquiry.

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The 2005 edition contains many additional notes. All three editions were published by Sri Ramanasramam.

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Anubhuti Venba. First Tamil edition 2005. Published by Sri Ramanasramam. No translations are available.

Guru Vachaka Kovai. Tamil editions published in 1939, 1971, 1998.

The first edition was published by Ramanapadananda; the two subsequent ones by Sri Ramanasramam. The first edition contained 852 verses by Muruganar, plus twenty-four by Bhagavan. The expanded second edition had a total of 1254 verses, twenty-eight of which were by Bhagavan. The 1998 third edition contained the same number of verses as the 1974 edition. It also included many of Muruganar's own explanatory notes that had not featured in any of the earlier editions.

A Sanskrit translation of 300 of the verses by K. Lakshmana Sarma was first published under the title of *Guru Ramana Vachana Mala* in 1939 by Ramanapadananda. A Tamil prose version of the same work was translated and published by K. Lakshmana Sarma himself in 1940. Sri Ramanasramam now publishes English translations of K. Lakshmana Sarma's original Sanskrit text.

The first English translation, by Prof. K. Swaminathan, was serialised in *The Mountain Path* in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. The translations were first brought out in a single book, *The Garland*

of the Guru's Sayings in 1990, published by Sri Ramanasramam, to commemorate Muruganar's birth centenary.

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The vast majority of the 18,000 verses in these nine volumes have yet to be translated. Volume nine contains a 3,000-verse poem entitled 'Padamalai'. 1,800 of these verses were translated by T. V. Venkatasubramanian, Robert Butler and David Godman and appeared in English under the title *Padamalai* in 2004. Published by David Godman.

The Tamil text is out of print but it is available online at: http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource_centre/publications/ramana-jnana-bodham/

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A translation and commentary of the first of its poems, 'Ramana Puranam', was done by Robert Butler, T. V. Venkatasubramanian and David Godman and was published as a separate book by Sri Ramanasramam in 2006. 'Ramana Puranam' did not appear in the original 1933 edition of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai.*

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Muruganar

"Our father, who became my inseparable Lord of bliss, you reigned over me with an abundance of kindness, looking upon me as someone who was entitled to your true love. What can I say? What recompense can I offer? And by what means? I sing your glory constantly, dwell on it, and abide wholly as you."

Muruganar

The power and presence of Ramana Maharshi consumed Muruganar completely, impelling him to compose thousands of Tamil verses that proclaimed his own liberation and expressed his gratitude to Sri Ramana for revealing this state to him. They also recorded many of his master's teachings. This new anthology of Muruganar's writings, primarily taken from *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, contains over 1,000 of his verses that have never appeared in English before. They have been translated and arranged by Dr T. V. Venkatasubramanian and David Godman.

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